

Clara Stein

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EDUCATION

University College Dublin **PhD in Psychology funded by the Irish Research Council** **2022-2025**

- Supervisors: Prof Jessica Bramham & Dr Fiadhnaid O'Keeffe
- Ongoing interdisciplinary research on the impact of cognitive reserve on cognitive functioning in people with multiple sclerosis conducted in collaboration with St. Vincent's University Hospital
- Relevant research training and modules: Ethics in Psychology, Psychology Research Seminars, Adv. Psychology Skills
- Participated in the Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging MRI Graduate Programme (University of Oxford)

University College Dublin **Master of Science (First Class Honours) in Behavioural Neuroscience** **2021-2022**

- Supervisors: Prof Jessica Bramham & Dr Fiadhnaid O'Keeffe
- Thesis: The role of estimated premorbid cognitive functioning in differences between self-reported cognitive difficulties and formal cognitive assessment in people with multiple sclerosis
- Relevant research training and modules: Adv. Research Methods and Statistics (SPSS & R), Behavioural Neuroscience Labs (eye tracking, VR, neuropsychological assessment, EEG/ERP), Adv. Cognitive Psychology, Principles of Neuroscience, Clinical Cases in Neuropsychology, Knowledge Transfer

University of Edinburgh **Master of Arts (First Class Honours) in Psychology** **2017-2021**

- Supervisor: Dr Sarah E MacPherson
 - Undergraduate Dissertation: Cognitive reserve and semantic knowledge as independent predictors of cognitive estimation task performance in healthy older adults
 - Relevant research training and honours courses: Research Methods and Statistics (R), Cognitive Neuroscience of Memory, Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience: Infancy
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HONOURS & AWARDS

- Winner of the 2023 Psychological Society of Ireland Division of Neuropsychology Early Career Award
 - University College Dublin CoSSL Research Funding Scheme 2023/24 (€2,500)
 - Irish Research Council 2022 Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship (€82,500)
 - Runner-up prize for best poster at the 2022 All-Ireland & Northern Ireland MS Research Network Symposium
 - Commended for the 2022 Psychological Society of Ireland Division of Neuropsychology Early Career Award
 - Nominated for the Margaret Donaldson Prize for best undergraduate dissertation poster (2021)
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RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

PhD Research Supervised by Prof Jessica Bramham & Dr Fiadhnaid O'Keeffe **2022-2025**

- 36-month-long research project investigating the impact of cognitive reserve (CR) on self-reported cognitive difficulties and performance on cognitive assessments in pwMS
- Independent design and execution of three research phases which respectively seek to identify (1) appropriate methods of investigating CR in MS, (2) the impact of CR on cognitive functioning, and (3) the relationship between CR-enhancing factors and MRI whole brain volume and lesion load in pwMS
- Interdisciplinary collaboration across St. Vincent's University Hospital and UCD, requiring excellent research skills (independent and critical thinking, study design and execution, participant recruitment, data collection, management and analysis), clear communication and adaptive teamwork

Master Thesis Supervised by Prof Jessica Bramham & Dr Fiadhnaid O'Keeffe **2021-2022**

- 11-month-long research project investigating the impact of estimated premorbid cognitive functioning in the frequently observed discrepancy between self-reported cognitive difficulties and performance on cognitive assessments in pwMS (A+ grade)
- Conducted in close collaboration with St. Vincent's University Hospital's MS Mood and Cognitive Screening Programme (working with the Assistant Psychologist, Clinical Neuropsychologists, and wider Neurology team)
- Developed and executed the analysis strategy (using R) following a literature review

- Research Psychologist in Neurology & Psychology at St. Vincent's University Hospital** **May-Sep 2022**
- Independent administration and scoring of neuropsychological assessments in the MS Mood and Cognitive Screening Programme, an Outpatient service within the Neurology department
- Research Assistant for a Doctoral Candidate in Clinical Psychology** **Jan-Feb 2022**
- Data entry and management for a validation study of the English in Ireland adaptation of the Philadelphia Repeatable Verbal Learning Test in older adults with diagnosed memory disorders
- Undergraduate Dissertation Supervised by Dr Sarah E MacPherson** **2020-2021**
- Design and execution of a study (task programming using PsyToolkit, recruitment of participants, and data analysis using R) investigating semantic knowledge and cognitive reserve as independent predictors of cognitive estimation abilities in healthy older adults (First Class grade)
- Volunteer Research Assistant for a PhD Candidate** **2019-2020**
- Independent data collection (neuropsychological and computer-based tests) for behavioural research on the relation between semantic and episodic memory in older and younger adults
 - Established excellent rapport through well-coordinated teamwork with the PhD candidate and two other RAs, which enabled smooth procedures and solution-oriented thinking
- Mini-Dissertation Project Supervised by Dr Nicolas Chevalier** **2019-2020**
- Group project investigating the effect of engaging in cognitive control on statistical learning in different versions of an object categorisation task
 - Responsibilities included participant recruitment, data collection and analysis using R, study write-up, and preparation of a conference presentation, all of which required excellent time management, clear communication with seven other team members and the supervisor
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SCIENCE COMMUNICATION & TEACHING

- Teaching Assistant in the School of Psychology (UCD)** **Sep-Dec 2023**
- Dr Michelle Downes' UG PSY30050 Behavioural Neuroscience (100 students) and PG PSY40020 Neuropsychology (10 students) and PSY40820 Fundamentals of Neuropsychology (10 students) modules
 - Core responsibilities include grading, independent teaching and leadership around group activities, admin and queries, lecturing on MS research during the neurodegenerative disorders content
- Member of the Psychological Society of Ireland Science and Public Policy Committee (SPPC)** **2023-present**
- I proposed and now lead a working group (5 members) tasked with identifying and addressing systemic barriers in Psychology as a discipline and profession, with a goal of widening participation (current theme of the SPPC)
 - Reviewed abstracts for the annual PSI conference
- Volunteer with Science Outreach Organizations** **2021-present**
- Trained and registered with Letters to a Pre-Scientist (LPS) and Skype a Scientist, science outreach programmes inspiring students of all ages, particularly those from low-income communities, to consider a STEM career
 - LPS responsibilities include exchanging 1:1 age-appropriate letters on STEM topics
 - Skype a Scientist outreach involves the preparation and delivery of engaging and accessible presentations to classrooms across the world, in coordination with the class teacher and in line with the students' experience, interests and questions
- Postgraduate Demonstrator in the School of Psychology (UCD)** **Sep-Dec 2021**
- Independent teaching and assessment of the UG Psychology Stress, Health and Coping Lab (10 students per lab, 2 labs à 3 hours per week)
 - Awarded the Teacher Support Training Badge upon completion of the trimester-long and CPD-accredited College of Social Sciences and Law Teaching Support Training Programme
- Science Writer** **2020-present**
- Articles featured in the *Edinburgh University Science Media*, *InSPIre the Mind* (official blog of King's College London's Stress, Psychiatry and Immunology Laboratory), the UCD Neuropsychology Lab Blog, and *The Particle*, a medium publication dedicated to science communication across disciplines

- Successfully pitched articles to editorial teams, integrated constructive feedback, and presented psychological research in an accessible and engaging manner
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PUBLICATIONS

Peer-reviewed articles

- **Stein, C., O'Keeffe, F., McManus, C., Tubridy, N., Gaughan, M., McGuigan, C., & Bramham, J. (2023).** Premorbid cognitive functioning influences differences between self-reported cognitive difficulties and cognitive assessment in multiple sclerosis. *Journal of Neuropsychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jnp.12327>

Abstracts

- **Stein, C., O'Keeffe, F., Bramham, J., McManus, C., McGuigan, C., Tubridy, N., & Gaughan, M. (2022).** P14: The role of estimated premorbid cognitive abilities in differences between self-reported cognitive difficulties and formal cognitive assessment in people with multiple sclerosis. *Multiple Sclerosis Journal*, 28 (2S), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13524585221100731>

Science communication

- **Stein, C. (2023, January 31).** Finding the PhD-life-balance: A personal account. *InSPIre the Mind*. <https://www.inspirethemind.org/post/finding-the-phd-life-balance>
 - **Stein, C. (2022, March 23).** Multiple sclerosis: What is it and how can it affect cognitive functioning? *UCD Neuropsychology Lab Blog*. <https://www.ucdneuropsychologylab.com/blog/multiple-sclerosis>
 - **Stein, C. (2021, July 27).** How everyday activities can allow our brains to be flexible and adaptive across the lifespan. *InSPIre the Mind*. <https://www.inspirethemind.org/post/how-everyday-activities-can-allow-our-brains-to-be-flexible-and-adaptive-across-the-lifespan>
 - **Stein, C. (2021, June 30).** Aren't we all 'natural psychologists'? Science shops and citizen science approaches may enrich the academic study of psychology. *The Particle*. <https://medium.com/the-particle/arent-we-all-natural-psychologists-550c2d59ae7c>
 - **Stein, C. (2020, October 6).** How memory science can help us this semester. *Edinburgh University Science Magazine*. <http://eusci.org.uk/2020/10/06/how-memory-science-can-help-us-this-semester/>
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CONFERENCES

Poster presentations

- All-Ireland & Northern Ireland MS Research Network Masterclass Symposium: Advances in Multiple Sclerosis Research & Care in the Digital Age (12.09.22-13.09.22)
 - International Multiple Sclerosis Cognition Society (IMSCOGS) Annual Meeting (18.05.22-19.05.22)
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INVITED TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Brain Awareness Week March 2023 video for the Psychological Society of Ireland shared via Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CE-9xt79I5U>)
- Presented on cognitive reserve in multiple sclerosis at the MS Ireland event 'Research in Neuropsychology, Cognition and Psychological Well-Being' in honour of World MS Day (May 2023)