



WHY IT MATTERS... PSYCHOLOGY



Loughborough University

Dr Chris McLeod

University Teacher in Psychology

My main research area is in eating behaviour. This is such an important and engaging area to research because, in short, everybody eats!

Everybody eats every day, and multiple times a day too.

As it's a fundamental part of human life, and as eating food is necessary for us to survive, it is really important to fully understand what drives us to choose the foods we eat, our portion sizes and the amount we eat.

It's also vitally important because the rates of people living with obesity have been increasing dramatically over the past 30 years across the world. This is a problem because there are many diseases and difficulties associated with obesity such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental health disorders and physical ailments such as arthritis.

If we can better understand what has changed in the way we eat over these 30 years, we can begin to start making changes to our lives (implemented at individual, national and international scales) that can (hopefully) help start to reduce the number of people living with the disease.



Post 16 Education	Higher Education
A level Geography, French, Spanish, Music	MA Human Geography (at St Andrews) MSc Sport and Exercise Nutrition (at Loughborough) PhD Psychology (at Loughborough)

Why did you want to research eating behaviour?

Over a five-to-ten-year period over my late teens and early 20s, I became fascinated with how food can influence the way you feel, look, act and think.

I found it amazing that by better understanding why specific foods, eaten in specific ways and at specific times, can change so many aspects of your life, you can change your life to be able to do more things, have more energy, think clearer and try to be the best force for good in your community and in the world as you can.





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Chris' experience as a student

Hard work...I didn't have the advice that I've given you and so did a 'general' subject that I didn't have a great deal of interest in.

I managed to make it work and fell into looking at human behaviour in my final year (which is more where I ended up with my PhD in Psychology). But also...at St Andrews University you can take other subjects in your first two years as well as your main subject. So I also studied Management, Art History and Music, as well as Geography.

Again...nothing like the area I study and work in now!

Chris' Career

I am now a University Teacher in Psychology at Loughborough University having just finished my PhD in eating behaviour.

I'm so grateful to be here, doing what I really enjoy – it just took a little longer for me to get there.

All of my previous experiences in Higher Education have helped me to this point but a really important point for people coming to (or currently at) university is that there are many different paths that can get you to the same outcome. Some paths may just take a little longer.



Chris' advice: Think about taking a subject that you really enjoy onto university, even if it's in a really niche area. In my view it's better to be highly skilled in a really specific area, rather than have a general degree that isn't specific for anything or that you aren't too keen on.

If you end up not wanting to go into your niche area after university, then your degree will be great stepping stone onto your next venture. If it still is what you love at the end of university, you're in the perfect position to get a job or further qualifications in that field.

Loughborough University offer undergraduate BSc (Hons) degrees in

Psychology, Psychology with Criminology, Psychology in Education, Sport and Exercise Psychology

Please note: Degrees and their titles change over time. Some of these graduates may have studied degrees that have evolved and changed in response to changes in demand from employers.