

I'm a PhD researcher in the Psychology and Philosophy departments at the University of Edinburgh, where I explore ideology in moral psychology research and the neglect of collective explanations of human moral behaviour.

I work as an independent researcher, and am skilled at conducting in-depth investigations into complex social structural issues and on unfamiliar topics. I try to use my experience in philosophy to uncover ways to live well together.

In my free time, I like playing piano and cello, programming (particularly Linux and web development), painting and photography. I take joy in nature, connecting with others and being in the ocean.

Education

PhD Psychology

University of Edinburgh | 2022–present

I am writing an interdisciplinary thesis on the philosophy of moral psychology. I argue the concepts, frames and methods used in orthodox moral psychology bias it towards producing understandings of moral behaviour that align with economic liberalism, while excluding moral theories that do not so neatly align. I consider what the prospects are for a truly ideologically neutral moral psychology.

Completed courses: Univariate Statistical Methods in R, Multivariate Statistical Methods in R, Qualitative Methods in Psychological Research, Psychological Research Skills, Philosophy of Emotions, and Hegel's Phenomenology.

MSc Mind, Language and Embodied Cognition

University of Edinburgh | 2019–2020 | Distinction

Interdisciplinary masters spanning Philosophy, Psychology, Linguistics and Informatics. My thesis, 'Towards an Extended Network Theory of Mental Disorder' was an attempt to lay the groundwork for a network theory of the aetiology of mental illness that substantiates the biopsychosocial model of mental health.

Completed courses: Mind, Language and Embodied Cognition; Philosophical Methods; Self, Agency and the Will; Moral Judgement and Behaviour; Imaging Mind and Brain; Brain Imaging in Cognitive Neuroscience, and Ethics of AI.

BSc Hons Psychology with Certificate of Professional and Industrial Experience

University of Plymouth | 2014–2018 | First-Class Honours

BPS accredited undergraduate psychology degree. For my dissertation, 'I'm Not Exceptional': How Unspecified Kidney Donors Construct Their Identity, I interviewed altruistic kidney donors and analysed how they constructed their decision to donate and their identity as donors using discursive psychology and narrative analysis.

Completed courses included: Research Methods and Critical Thinking, Clinical Psychology, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Learning, Cognitive Psychology, Neuropsychology, Psychobiology, Individual

Employment and Internships

Open Source Pledge (Sentry)

Jun–Nov 2025

Sentry, an application monitoring software company (\$3b valuation), contracted me to do research work for the [Open Source Pledge](#), an initiative to preserve the global Open Source software ecosystem, which has raised \$4,853,685 for developers. I conducted a literature review, qualitative analysis of materials authored by the Open Source community, and a community consultation. I used this to compile the to-date most comprehensive [report](#) on the causes and possible solutions to burnout in Open Source. I also wrote a [blog post](#) for the Open Source Pledge blog to publicise it, and [presented my findings at FOSDEM](#), the world's biggest Open Source software conference.

This work helped the Pledge's growth by drawing attention from prominent figures in tech and securing news coverage in 10 news websites in 5 different languages, including [The Register](#), [Forkable](#), [Developer](#), [It's FOSS](#) and [FOSS United](#). An ex-GitHub Principal Engineer described my work as 'a great addition to a much needed conversation', and a maintainer of the Pledge described my research as having a 'rarely-seen thoroughness'.

Scottish Graduate School of Social Science (SGSSS)

Associate Officer for Student Engagement | Mar 2023–Apr 2023

I worked as part of a team to represent the interests of Scottish post-graduate students to the doctoral funding body SGSSS. I networked and collected feedback from student representatives across three Scottish universities on issues affecting postgraduate students. I also co-organised a symposium for post-graduate students on interdisciplinary research and mental health for researchers, arranging speakers and catering and designing the event to maximise accessibility for disadvantaged students.

School of History, Classics and Archaeology, University of Edinburgh

Field Research Fellow | Mar 2023–Apr 2023

Worked for a project in the Archaeology Department at the University of Edinburgh evaluating a history teaching chatbot, Chatterpast, which was designed to teach children aged 7-11 about tolerance for different groups in the present by allowing them to chat with digital avatars of fictional characters from the past. I designed the research materials used to evaluate the chatbot and contributed to the overall study design.

Peninsula Medical School, University of Plymouth

Research Assistant | June 2019-Sep 2019 & Dec 2021–Feb 2022

Worked on three research projects within the University of Plymouth's Medical School. 1) A project exploring the value of having medical and dental students create storyboards of their clinical work experiences to promote learning through reflection. I thematically analysed journal data and developed a scheme for analysing the visual content of students' storyboards. This was written up into a journal article that is currently under review. 2) A project evaluating a leadership and management course for medical trainees. I recruited participants, conducted interviews, analysed their responses, and wrote a report on my findings. 3) A project exploring the value of having students' look back on their past reflections on their time in medical school. I qualitatively analysed students' reflective diaries and helped

write an article discussing our findings, which was published in the journal *Reflective Practice*. Through this work, I informed the Medical School on how to improve their degree programme for future cohorts, and contributed new knowledge to the field of medical pedagogy on the value of reflective learning.

Well Connected

Research Assistant | Oct 2018–Nov 2019

Conducted research for a charity that works to improve health outcomes in disadvantaged communities across Devon, UK. I analysed feedback from medical and dental students at the University of Plymouth on their experiences undertaking a community engagement work placement using thematic analysis. This helped inform the teaching team at the university's Medical and Dental School on how to improve their community work placements, making them better for community members and more educational for students. I co-wrote an article on community work placements as an opportunity for transformative learning in medical and dental students, which was published in the journal *Education for Primary Care*. I also conducted thematic analysis and contributed writing to an article on teaching medical students shared decision-making, which was published in *The Clinical Teacher*.

School of Psychology, University of Plymouth

Research Assistant | Jun 2018–Sep 2018 & Mar 2017–Sep 2017

I started as an intern and was subsequently hired to continue working on the first ever qualitative research project exploring the experiences of altruistic kidney donors in the UK. This work was funded by the UK's National Institute for Health Research. I conducted telephone interviews with donors, and transcribed and analysed interview and focus group data using thematic analysis and conversation analysis. I contributed to the writing and editing of two articles for publication, and presented the research at a conference for *Conversation Analysis in Clinical Encounters*. This work helped shed light on the motives of and experiences of altruistic kidney donors, and was used to inform the UK National Blood and Transplant Service on how to improve the altruistic donation process.

School of Psychology, University of Plymouth

Honorary Assistant Psychologist | Mar 2017–Jul 2017

Internship shadowing a clinical psychologist in Plymouth University's Clinical Psychology department. I assisted her in evaluating the department's Safer Recruitment Training, designed to help staff learn to spot people who might pose a risk to clients among applicants to the university's Clinical Psychology Doctoral programme. I analysed participant feedback surveys using quantitative (descriptive statistics) and qualitative (thematic analysis) methods. I co-wrote an article discussing our findings, which was published in the *British Psychological Society Journal Clinical Psychology Forum*. This helped inform other universities developing safe recruitment practices. Additionally, I attended a meeting of local National Health Service departments to learn about how they coordinate to support people with co-occurring mental illnesses and intellectual disabilities. The psychologist I shadowed described being 'instantly impressed' by my initiative and that she has 'a sense of hope for the future of psychology with such individuals going forward.'

Dartmoor Institute of Animal Science

Research Team Member | Dec 2016–Mar 2017

Joined the Dartmoor Institute of Animal Science at Dartmoor Zoo as a research intern. I worked with a robotics student at the local university to design and construct a robotic tiger feeding box, and worked with

zookeepers to construct a digging pit for the racoon dogs, reducing pacing behaviour. I also researched the possibility of making musical compositions to affect the mood of meerkats based on their alarm calls.

Elected and Voluntary Roles ---

Green Party of England and Wales (GPEW)

Digital Policy Working Group Member | Oct 2023–present

I was invited to join the Green Party of England and Wales' Digital Policy Working Group after offering feedback on the Party's new AI policy in a speech to the Party's Autumn Conference 2023. Here, I have contributed to discussion on AI ethics and reducing the carbon consumption of digital technologies, helping inform the Party's digital policies.

Young Greens of England and Wales

Events Officer | Jul 2022–Jul 2023

I was elected by the 6000-strong membership of the youth wing of the Green Party of England and Wales to a 1-year term as Events Officer on their Executive Committee. I did the logistical planning for a residential youth political training programme and two conferences, including finding venues, accommodation, entertainment and catering. I also consulted with under-represented groups in the Party on how to make events as accessible to a diverse range of participants as possible. These events all came in significantly under-budget and received positive feedback from participants. I also attended bi-weekly executive meetings, co-developed a political communications strategy, and wrote quarterly reports on my work so I could remain accountable to Party members.

Human Harmony Nepal

Women's Empowerment Worker | Feb 2019–Mar 2019

I volunteered for a charity promoting women's empowerment and education in the impoverished village of Kagatigaun in rural Kathmandu. I designed all the teaching materials and delivered 3-4 English classes a day to children aged 5-16 at the local school, to improve their educational and career prospects. I also helped organise the village's first women's empowerment march on International Women's Day, which raised awareness and created a dialogue around issues such as chhaupadi (ritual impurity during menstruation), child marriage and domestic violence.

SLV Global

Peer Mentor | Nov 2018–Jan 2019 & Sep 2016–Dec 2016

Volunteered as a mental health support worker and mentor to other volunteers for an organisation working to improve mental health outcomes in Sri Lanka. I worked with other volunteers to plan and deliver mental health activity sessions in mental health institutions, hospitals and special educational needs schools. This required me to work across language and cultural barriers, and to learn to engage responsibly with people experiencing acute mental health episodes. I attended on the job training in mental health in a Sri Lankan context, and shadowed a clinical psychologist working with people affected by the civil war and tsunami to learn about the impact of group trauma. I also created and delivered English lessons to children and adults.

I supported the running of the organisation by pastorally supporting volunteers and attending regular meetings to feedback on how they could improve their service for service users and volunteers. I took it upon myself to learn as much as I could about the ethics of international aid work by talking to hospital

staff about the kind of support they most needed from international volunteers and volunteers about the challenges of providing it.

Samaritans of Plymouth, East Cornwall and South West Devon

Listening volunteer | Sep 2017–July 2018

I volunteered weekly to provide emotional support to people at risk of suicide by phone, text and email. This entailed 6 months training on topics like active listening, empathy, safeguarding vulnerable people, self-harm and signposting.

Alzheimer's Society

Befriender | Oct 2014–May 2016

I volunteered to provide weekly companionship and practical support to a service user with dementia so they could continue to live safely in the community.

ShelterBox

Fundraiser | Sep 2015

I co-organised a camp-out on campus at the University of Plymouth to raise funds for ShelterBox in support of the refugee crisis. This raised over £800 in donations and helped educate the public on the resources required to keep people safe in a refugee camp.

Publications and Talks

Peer Reviewed Articles

Leyland, R., Heath, M., Collett, T., Drake, E., & Neve, H. (2024). *'How far I've come': The value of reviewing past reflections*. *Reflective Practice*, 1–13.

Neve, H., Hanks, S., Heath, M. & Smith, W. (2020). *'Today's shook me up a lot inside...it's definitely changed me': Emotional responses and transformative learning through working with disadvantaged communities*. *Education for Primary Care*, 31(6), 358-364.

Leyland, R., Heath, M., Neve, H., & Maynard, V. (2020). *Structured reflection on shared decision making*. *The Clinical Teacher*, 17, 1–7.

Lloyd, H., & Heath, M. (2018). *A spotlight on safeguarding in trainee selection: The Plymouth programme's experience of Safer Recruitment*. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, 306, 25–29.

Reports

Heath, M. (2025) *A Report on Burnout in Open Source Communities*.

News Articles

Heath, M. (2025) *Burnout in Open Source: A Structural Problem We Can Fix Together*. *The Open Source Pledge Blog*.

Conference Talks

Heath, M. *Burnout in Open Source: A Structural Problem We Can Fix Together*. *FOSDEM 2026*, Brussels, Jan 2026.

Heath, M. 'Individualism Makes us Altruistic and Happy'?: The Role of Moral Psychology Research in the Performance of Economic Liberalism. *Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) Society London*, London, Jul 2025.

Heath, M. 'Individualism Makes us Altruistic and Happy'?: The Role of Moral Psychology Research in the Performance of Economic Liberalism. *Association for Social and Political Philosophy (ASPP)*, Glasgow, Jul 2025.

Heath, M. Better when we're together: Expanding the moral circle through collective moral concern. *Society for the Psychology of Human-Animal Intergroup Relations (PHAIR)*, Edinburgh, Jul 2025.

Heath, M. 'Individualism makes us altruistic and happy'?: The reification of neoliberal ideology in altruism research. *European Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ECQI)*, Edinburgh, Jan 2025.

Heath, M. 'I'm not exceptional': How unspecified kidney donors construct their identity. *British Psychological Society (BPS) South West Undergraduate Psychology Conference*, Plymouth, 2018.

Auburn, T., Williams, L., & Heath, M. Unspecified kidney donor's constructions of family: A membership categorisation analysis. *Conversation Analysis in Clinical Encounters (CACE) Conference*, Bristol, 2017.

Awards

BPS Undergraduate Award for Highest Grade Upon Graduation

British Psychological Society (BPS) | 2018

Graduated from my BSc Psychology with the highest grade in my cohort

Qualitative Psychology Prize

University of Plymouth | 2018

Had the highest graded qualitative psychology dissertation in my cohort

School of Psychology Award for Best Overall Performance in Stage 4

University of Plymouth | 2018

Received the highest grade in the final year of my BSc Psychology in my cohort

School of Psychology Award for Best Overall Performance in Stage 2

University of Plymouth | 2016

Received the highest grade in the second year of my BSc Psychology in my cohort

University of Plymouth Students' Union Community Volunteer of the Year

University of Plymouth Students' Union (UPSU) | 2018

Nominated by and won an award for community volunteering for my work as a befriender for a patients with Alzheimer's disease for the Alzheimer's Society

A Level Philosophy and Ethics prize

Devonport High School for Boys | 2014

Received 100% on all of my A-level Philosophy and Ethics exams

Additional Courses and Certificates

Introduction to Bayesian Statistics

Centre for Data, Culture and Society | 2024

Two-day workshop on Bayesian statistical analysis in R.

Getting Started with Version Control: Introduction to Git and GitHub

Centre for Data, Culture and Society | 2023

Two-day workshop on using Git, GitHub and GitHub Pages.

Doing Discourse Analysis: Populism, Neoliberalism and Radical Democratic Politics

Essex Summer School | 2023

2-week course on the Essex School of Post-Structural Discourse Analysis, led by Prof David Howarth, co-director of the [Centre for Ideology and Discourse Analysis](#) .

All Politics is Mental Health Politics

Federation of Young European Greens | 2022

Selected to participate in a 3-day residential course learning how to advocate for political change around mental health at the European level, including debate training by a member of EU Parliament

30 Under 30

Young Greens of England and Wales | 2022

Selected to participate in the Young Greens of England and Wales's residential training programme, learning how to become an effective Green activist and politician

Ancient and Clinical Psychology

SLV Global | 2019

1-week training programme in Bengaluru, India, including a three-day workshop in cultural perspectives in mental health practices at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS)

Sprint Programme

University of Plymouth | 2017

4-day personal development programme for undergraduate and postgraduate women in STEM

Teaching English as a Foreign Language 80-hour Methodology Course

The TEFL Org | 2016

80 hour online course on how to teach English as a foreign language, including English grammar, teaching skills and classroom management

Skills and Languages

Research

Data collection (online and in person), systematic and rapid literature review, interviews and focus groups, participant recruitment, community consultation

Communication

Academic writing, science communication, presenting

Qualitative data analysis

Thematic analysis, discourse analysis, qualitative data analysis software

Quantitative data analysis

Multi-level modelling, Bayesian statistics, R, study design, survey design

Programming and typesetting

Statistics in R; version control with Git; HTML, Markdown and CSS; typesetting with Typst and some LaTeX; some Linux knowledge; some Python knowledge

Languages

English (native), Norwegian (intermediate written, basic spoken)