

# HCI Camp 2019

## Post Event Report



HCI Camp (<http://hci.camp>) was a week long summer school that was hosted at the University of Dundee in the Summer of 2019. The purpose of the summer school was to equip the researchers of tomorrow with the skills needed to carry out world leading HCI Research. The summer school was split up into interactive workshops where attendees learned the skills required to carry out HCI Research followed by hands-on group work sessions where attendees put these skills into practice by completing a short HCI study over the period of the week.

HCI Camp 2019 was held at the University of Dundee and was attended by 44 PhD students from 14 different universities across Europe. The summer school took place between the 24-28<sup>th</sup> of June and consisted of taught workshop sessions by 10 different facilitators covering a number of research methods that are key within HCI PhDs. An outline of taught sessions is below:

Session Title	Facilitator	Feedback Scoring (out of 5)
Project and Study Design	Dr Michael Crabb	4.6
Wellbeing for Researchers	Prof Wendy Moncur	4.1
Self-Reported Questionnaires	Dr Ben Cowan	4.5
Experimental Design	Dr Ben Cowan	4.4
Qualitative Data Gathering Methods	Dr Michael Crabb	4.8
Quantitative Analysis I	Dr Miguel Nacenta	4.7
Qualitative Analysis I	Dr Daniel Clarke	3.8
Qualitative Analysis II	Dr Rachel Menzies	4.2
Qualitative Analysis II	Dr Martin Halvey	4.6
Academic Writing	Panel Session	4.7
Academic Scholarship	Prof Alan Newell	4.3

Student feedback from the event was extremely positive and gave the event a 4.75/5.0 average scoring. Comments from students regarding the event are below:

- *Excellent idea and well executed. Very enjoyable and I learned a lot.*
- *Very enjoyable and thought-provoking event. Was worthwhile for me to learn about the various quantitative methods on offer and how they should be applied*
- *Please repeat it. I think it is especially helpful for PhD students in their first and second year and gives them a really good overview of what is out there and what they can then go back to and look up in more detail, when they are interested. It's also a very good opportunity for networking and meeting people. It is quite intense, I needed a lot of sleep afterwards, but I feel that with the session for one or 1.5 h and then breaks it was manageable. Great week! Thank you so much for all the hard work and setting up this valuable and informative event!*
- *The organisers did a perfect job. Well done to all who made it happen. it was very educational and insightful*
- *I learned something new each day and I loved it.*
- *Such a valuable week - thank you so much for organising it. I would highly recommend it. Very good taught sessions, and workshops, also enjoyed the team work/practical's, also enjoyed re-meeting people from previous events, and meeting new people too. Learnt a lot and am starting to apply it in my work.*

Throughout the summer school students were encouraged to make connections with their peers and to discuss their research with others. In order to visualise this at the end of the week each student was asked to write their name within a circle on a whiteboard and to then draw lines between themselves and others that they had connected with. Whilst messy, this begins to show the number of connections that were made through the event.



## Event Sponsorship

We would like to express gratitude to all of the supporters and sponsors of HCI Camp that were able to provide time, facilities, and funding that enabled this event to happen. Special thanks go to the organisations below.

- *SICSA - The Scottish Informatics & Computer Science Alliance*
- *The University of Dundee*
- *Overleaf*
- *Balsamiq*

## Event Future

Whilst this event took a large amount of organisation, it is clear that this was worth the effort. Students benefited from attending in terms of their research method skills that were developed and also in the connections that were made. It is suggested that this event continues in the future, perhaps on a bi-annual basis, with larger involvement from other universities. For this to be

possible funding will need to be secured with possible venues for this including SICSA and ACM. In feedback, some participants suggested other sessions that would have been beneficial. These could be run as additional education events within SICSA or as sessions within a larger summer school in the future:

- *I would have also liked to have at least one session where we could specifically take a look at some HCI experiments and maybe analyse them in a critical way*
- *Interview analysis! Coding etc.*
- *Something on ethnography/ observation methods*
- *Case Study Design*
- *More technical aspects of programming*
- *I could imagine a follow up on the sessions for next stages. And all the sessions left me wanting more - was exhausted by the end of the week, in a good way!*

## Detailed Comments on Sessions

### Project and Study Design - Dr Michael Crabb

- *I found it very helpful*
- *A sample project, example would help.*
- *Good session giving an overview of the stages involved in designing a project.*
- *Super informative and a good overall view of the process*
- *I liked the way the process was shown as complex and potentially multi-routed. I also like Dr Crabb's quiet, kind and knowledgeable approach to how he presents - calmly takes one down the route he wants, with encouragement. Also, good that he revisited the diagram later in the week.*
- *Good, clear, well presented (with excellent slides).*

### Wellbeing for Researchers - Dr Wendy Moncur

- *I thought by the title of the session that she was going to give us strategies for our wellbeing but in most of the session she focused on telling her experiences, and just by the end she asked the students to come up with ideas about wellbeing*
- *A very interesting researcher, I like her thought process.*
- *While a really interesting talk I think the relatableness of the experiences might have been too niche.*
- *I thought the session was going to be a talk on how to manage the stresses of being an academic researcher. Although it was entertaining, I would have preferred this.*
- *I did like the stories and the point she brought home with them. I did expect some more tips about taking care of yourself while doing your PhD/research.*
- *One of the better sessions. Wendy is amazing and was inspirational for me.*
- *Very interesting and thought-provoking session - not what I expected from the title, and more valuable than I expected. Would value more on ethical and personal dilemmas at future events. Thanks for your honesty in presenting and in Q&A.*

### Self-Reported Questionnaires - Dr Ben Cowan

- *Kept losing focus, if he can hold my focus - maybe that would be more beneficial in staying alert - I noticed this in all his lectures.*
- *Interesting topic. perhaps more practical examples rather than purely lecture style would have also worked well.*
- *Described the detailed steps involved in the design of a quantitative questionnaire in an accessible way*
- *Interesting to get insights into how questionnaires should be designed and why a well-balanced design is important*

- Good session, very useful concepts, clear introduction, will directly help my research planning. Thanks!

### **Experimental Design - Dr Ben Cowan**

- Very helpful, I'm already using his slides to design my experiments
- Kept losing focus, and mind kept wandering off
- Really good examples used. Useful topics.
- Very informative
- This was a nice introduction to the quantitative session that followed on Wednesday. Benjamin made clear the basics of experimental design, including independent/dependent variables.
- I would like to see this gone into in more detail in future events.
- Useful session - a good summary of what is needed, section on validity particularly useful

### **Qualitative Data Gathering Methods - Dr Michael Crabb**

- Very well put together material, it was helpful and insightful
- Good intro to qualitative. Right level and pace.
- Good discussion on the advantages/disadvantages of using different qualitative data gathering methods e.g. focus groups in comparison to interviews
- Good overview!
- This was a brief, yet still detailed, summary of qualitative data gathering methods. It provided a clear overview of the differences between focus groups and interviewing, and when it is best to use each. The session including information on transcribing was also very useful.
- Very pertinent to what I am doing and enabled me to reflect on where I have had less successful experiences with data gathering in the past, and therefore what to do next. I was wishing I'd had this earlier in the PhD journey, and then realised that without the mistakes I have made, I perhaps would not have understood the reasons for what you were saying... so it came at the right time. The sections on focus groups and on transcription were particularly useful for me. I would happily do another longer session on this...

### **Quantitative Analysis I - Dr Miguel Nacenta**

- The way he explained the content- every word sunk in
- Excellent slides - best talk on this I have seen.
- A bit rushed, could have used two slots to describe when various algorithms etc. should be utilised.
- A lot of information, good background info and basics, to understand finally why we do some things. It was a bit rushed in the end though and i'm sad that we didn't get more info about the alternatives to frequentist methods
- Amazing. The ONLY session that I have ever had where I actually gained some level of intuition regarding stats
- This was an excellent quick introduction into frequentist statistics by Miguel. It covered a broad range of knowledge that actually allowed our HCI team to do some analysis of the data we collected during our own studies. Very useful.
- Session gave a very good introduction to a topic/method I'm not hugely familiar with.
- this was a really good and honest session, challenging for me to follow, and I valued the content and the way it was delivered. Lots to ponder and follow up - and try to be less scared of... Thanks for this!
- An excellent introduction to the data gathering method I find most difficult.

## Qualitative Analysis I - Dr Daniel Clarke

- *It was extremely refreshing for me and my view of my PhD to see a totally different perspective on research, I really appreciate it*
- *Very high level and conceptual. Sorry but I didn't enjoy the session at all. It was a good talk but for a different audience and context.*
- *It could have been more focused towards HCI rather than coming from management point of view, but some techniques can be used - but don't know to what extent*
- *Fascinating. Quite left field but really explored the breadth of potential. Really thought provoking - may not have been to everyone's taste but I loved it.*
- *Definitions were read out too often which made it difficult to follow. Although Daniel forwarded on the audience to some important resources*
- *I expected a more practical approach. Some of the methods and ideas could have been presented on the examples of the drawings we did, but I felt like his talk was quite removed from what we really have to do. Especially without a background in qualitative analysis, I feel like I don't get as much out of this session than the others.*
- *Again, great talk and discussion on Qualitative... captured the main points and variety of possible methods available.*
- *Daniel's session was an interesting look into the reasoning behind the way we do qualitative analysis, and a slightly different theme than the rest of the camp.*
- *This was a stand-out session for me, so exciting in content and in the methods used to get us discussing and sharing. I feel there is much to follow up on from what you presented, and how you talked about emotion and presenting emotion was powerful. Thank you - lots to think about and do as a result of the session.*

## Qualitative Analysis II - Dr Rachel Menzies

- *I'm already applying this method to my own develop of literature review*
- *Slow paced. Also wish we were introduced to a few methods not just one method.*
- *Very well put together- really got us to understand how it is done practically and how each group put together the same pieces with little different label - seeing from others point of view!*
- *Really practical and demonstrated the challenges of qualitative research. May have been too focused on one concept.*
- *Fun interactive session*
- *Quite practical, gave a better idea of what qualitative analysis is about*
- *Having attended the session, I am now comfortable enough to attempt hosting an affinity diagramming session with participants - this is a big success. Allowing students to work together was also a nice change of pace.*
- *Really enjoyed this session and the workshop. I have used this type of method before, in work situations for analysing problems and risks, but did not realise it had a name, and had not thought of it as a way to code research data, and to validate the coding. Well presented, interesting, useful - I will be using this for sure! Thank you!*

## Qualitative Analysis II - Dr Martin Halvey

- *Spot on!*
- *Good topic and pace but for the beginners I think the slides were not as good as previous day.*
- *Could have followed on more from the first session*
- *I did like the approach and how he pointed back to what we did with Miguel the day before. Quite practical, with info's about what to do with what type of data, which was very helpful.*
- *Martin did reaffirm some topics discussed by Miguel and added a few other techniques that I was not completely sure of.*

- *This session was really fun and interesting, but I left without a super clear understanding of how to go about analysis, perhaps because as the speaker said it's a new and emerging space.*
- *Thank you - useful session, which I found difficult to follow in places, but you led us through it well. It is good to have something that allows those of us less confident with numbers to get back to the basics... I will need to revisit and revise all the quantitative areas, so this session and the slides will help with that. The practical session was excellent - my partner and I did not finish the exercises but were delighted to get as far as we did, and I gained in confidence with use of the tool, and with looking at the numbers. So good to be in a two and moving at our own speed.*

### **Academic Writing - Panel Session (Crabb, Nacenta, Halvey, Forbes)**

- *I liked the panel, but I would have also liked to have a more systematic teaching on this, maybe with some strategies or tips on writing papers*
- *Informative and indeed got to know about useful techniques*
- *Great discussion. Really good concept.*
- *Good to hear views from researchers from different backgrounds. May have benefited from additional participants who are at the early stages of their academic career.*
- *Loads of different views and inputs. Super helpful tips*
- *Really nice general discussion.*
- *The academic writing session was valuable in covering a whole range of questions I had about life as an academic. It even touched upon industry work, which I found helpful.*
- *Very useful to hear from a range of people with different experiences. Was especially nice to hear Daniel talking about "finding his voice" and trying to write academically whilst not compromising his own style.*
- *This was a cool session but mostly stayed off the topic given.*
- *Such good questions and answers - really helpful to hear the different views from everyone, and realise the difficulties are shared - that insight sent me away able to get a piece of writing to the next stage and send it for review since the Camp - thanks!*
- *Some good questions and interesting responses.*

### **Academic Scholarship - Prof Alan Newell**

- *I really enjoyed his talk, and I felt extremely motivated after it*
- *He is a great motivator- or maybe my perception about the topic was wrong, I assumed it would be based on how to look for or search for academic scholarship*
- *Good concept, and obviously a fascinating career. I think having a panel afterwards would have helped integrate the speaker and put his career in a current context. Would have liked to hear views on trends and they lessons that could be applied when approaching these key challenges.*
- *Although interesting I thought the talk was going to be on how to progress onto the next stage of your career after your PhD*
- *Less practical but very entertaining and a nice overview of how HCI has changed over the years.*
- *Professor Alan Newell is always an interesting person to hear from!*
- *This felt more like a series of fun anecdotes than an educational talk.*
- *A delight and a privilege to listen to Prof Newell - wow! Thank you so much.*
- *A great way to end the camp! Funny and inspiring; so rare these days to hear an academic speak in such a candid and unguarded manner. A refreshing change from the unfortunate strictures of tedious contemporary academia, and the conformist demands it places on younger academics.*