

Dr Anna Plessas-Kafantaris

BPsych(Hons), MEd, BCBA, MSc, PGDipPracPsych, PhD, Clinical Behavioural Psychologist

www.linkedin.com/in/annaplessas/

Licensure & Certification:

Registered Psychologist (#90-06575);
Certified Behaviour Analyst (# 1-11-8580)

I am a dedicated psychologist with a passion for neurodevelopmental conditions and a strong commitment to empowering girls and women. With extensive international experience and certifications as a Registered Psychologist and Clinical Behavior Analyst, I have honed my skills in evidence-based treatments to enhance the well-being of individuals and their families. My expertise lies in neurodevelopmental assessments, psychoeducation, behavioural change, mentoring students, and conducting research to advance the field of behavior psychology. I am dedicated to improving clinical outcomes through science and technology, and I specialise in providing therapy to individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions, such as autism spectrum disorder or ADHD, who may also experience mental health challenges.

SKILL COMPETENCIES

Collaboration and interdisciplinary work

I am an active developer of collaborative relationships:

- International collaborations throughout my career.
- Cross-discipline collaboration as part of my PhD (experimental, applied, and computer sciences).
- I value collegial teamwork.
- Confident to take on leadership roles.

Equity development

I am a passionate supporter of equity and diversity in the workspace:

- I am committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi; worked in Rotorua with under-represented groups and Māori.
- I have mentored students of diverse religions, gender, sexual orientation, cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- I have worked with diverse families and professionals in non-western countries.

Mentoring/supervision

I have extensive experience in this, demonstrated by:

- Supervising students creatively to fit their needs (in-vivo, live streaming, video recordings) and to sustain their motivation to complete studies.
- Used evidence-based teaching strategies (such as BST).
- Learning from students and enhancing creative thinking and problem-solving ideas.

Research

I am a passionate new researcher who is building my portfolio:

- I have published three papers in high-ranked journals and am preparing 4 for submission.
- I am a co-investigator for Cultural Issues in Behaviour-Analytic Services in Aotearoa.
- Successful in writing up applications and getting funding for educational projects.

Teaching

I have extensive teaching and curriculum design experience and ability:

- Used evidence-based teaching (e.g., Interteaching instruction).
- Co-taught papers
- Continuing educational development.
- In my time as a course manager – collaborations to develop the curriculum, appraisal of papers, administration.
- Online teaching.

WORKING HISTORY

2021-present	<i>Psychologist, Clinical Behaviour Analyst</i>	Co-founder and Director of Behavioural Health Limited - Te Toi o Haumanu Whanonga
2023-present	Vice-President for Non-profit Association for Training in Neurodevelopment	Monorodi, Athens, Greece
2004- 2022	<i>Clinical behavioural consultant and Diagnostic Assessments for neurodevelopmental conditions</i>	Monorodi, Athens & Zakynthos, Greece
2019-2020	<i>Intern Psychologist</i>	<i>Lakes DHB, Adult Community Mental Health & Addiction Service</i>
2018-2020	<i>Behavioural Consultant/ Intern Psychologist</i>	<i>Rotorua Specialist Schools, Kea Street, Rotorua</i>
2014-2018	<i>Senior Teaching Fellow and course manager</i>	<i>Providing postgraduate teaching for a postgraduate post-sequence course in Greece approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (Approval Number: 4261).</i>
2013-2014	<i>Teaching Fellow for the paper "Theories in Learning in Education". Developer of the curriculum</i>	<i>MSc Early Childhood Education with Special Needs, Aegean Omiros College and University of Wales</i>
2009-2015	<i>Senior Instructor for Continuing Professional Development (CPD)</i>	Free-lance contractor as Behaviour Consultant
2004-2013	<i>Senior Instructor for AAC (PECS), Behaviour management, verbal behaviour</i>	Pyramid Educational Consultants, USA/Hellas
2002-2016	<i>Clinical Leader for behaviour interventions/supports for children, adolescents and families</i>	Non-profit Association for Training in Neurodevelopment - Monorodi, Greece
1998-2002	<i>Tutor for behaviour interventions/support</i>	Brunel University School of Education, PEACH Young Autism Project and Autism Partnership by Dr McEachin

Tertiary Education: **PhD (AUT)** "Can a spiking neural network predict unknown learning histories solely on a snapshot of binary choice data? Oral examination on Monday 21 August 2023

Supervisors:

-Ass. Prof. Jason Landon, Head of Psychology and Neuroscience Department of Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand.

-Prof. Dave Parry, Head of discipline for IT, Media and Communications and Professor of Computer Science, Murdoch University, Western Australia.

-Ass Prof. Sarah Cowie, Department of Psychology, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Postgraduate Diploma in the Practice of Psychology from the University of Waikato, Hamilton, NZ. Awarded 2021

MSc. (Thesis only). First class honours. "Identification of Untrained Emotions by Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder after Equivalence Relations Training" 2017, University of Auckland, Auckland, NZ. Supervised by Angela Arnold.

Behaviour Analyst Certification Board Approved papers on Behaviour Analysis and Therapy for BCBA Certification, 2005, from Rehabilitation Institute, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, USA

MEd. (Taught + Thesis) in Educational Psychology, "Intensive behavioural intervention and language development for three children with autism spectrum disorder" 2000, from Dept. of Education, University of Manchester, UK.

BA. (Hons) in Psychology, 1997, from American College of Greece, Athens, Greece.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

1. Plessas, A, McCormack J & Kafantaris, I. (2019) The Potential Role of Applied Behaviour Analysis in the Cultural Environment of Māori Mental Health. *Behav Analysis Practice* (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40617-019-00359-0>
 2. Plessas, A., Billot, M. W., Tamatea, A., Medvedev, O. N., McCormack, J., & Anderson, A. (2021). Barriers and Facilitators of Access to Psychological Services for Indigenous Populations: A Scoping Review and Thematic Analysis. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 12, 1755. <https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsy.2021.747054>
 3. Plessas A, Espinosa-Ramos J, Parry D, Cowie S, Landon J (2021). Modelling learning history: The application of a spiking neural network model on pigeon choice behaviour. *Journal of Experimental Analysis of Behaviour Special edition: Neuroscience* <https://doi.org/10.1002/jeab.759>
 4. Anna Plessas, Joshua Bensemann, Josafath I. Espinosa-Ramos, Sarah Cowie, Jason Landon, Dave Parry. "Performance comparison of spiking neural networks to other neural networks in predicting reinforcement history of pigeons' binary choices", submitted for review
 5. Anna Plessas, Josafath I. Espinosa-Ramos, Sarah Cowie, Jason Landon, Dave Parry. "Where do pigeons' choices come from? Transfer learning in spiking neural networks for animal choices in behavioural research", submitted for review
 6. Anna Plessas, Josafath I. Espinosa-Ramos, Sarah Cowie, Jason Landon, Dave Parry. "A spiking neural network to personalise learning histories for pigeons' choice-making", to be submitted for review
 7. Plessas, A., Billot, M. W., Tamatea, A., Medvedev, O. N., McCormack, J., & Anderson, A. "Why don't they like us? A qualitative exploration of barriers for Māori accessing psychology services.", to be submitted for review
- Presented in several European and international conferences between 2001-2024.**

Research Funding (2020-2022)

Co-investigator. Behaviour-Analytic Services in Aotearoa – Cultural Issues. Submission to the Strategic Research Fund (2020 Project Grant). University of Waikato School of Psychology.

I am an active member of:

- NZ Psychological Society
- Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI)
- European Association of Behaviour Analysis (EABA)
- Co-founding member of the Greek Community of Behaviour Analysis
- The International Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions (IACAPAP)
- Culture and Diversity subgroup, ABAI
- Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
- Part of AI & Ethics Subcommittee for Behaviour Analyst