



**UK Society for  
Behaviour Analysis**

## **SIG Chair Summaries – AGM 2025**

### ***Special Interest Groups (SIGs) Overview***

The aim of the UK SBA SIGs to ensure the UK-SBA is representing consumers of behaviour analytic services and representing the scope of behaviour analytic practice across the UK. The UK SBA also encourages SIGs to develop and share useful resources and information with the public and membership.

We have a dedicated SIGs page on our website with a separate page for each SIG. The SIGs Page contains information about how to contact the SIG Lead, what a SIG is and how to create a SIG. Each individual SIG page displays the contact email address for each SIG so there is opportunity for all to contact each SIG Chair direct. We encourage the SIG Chairs to provide regular updates for their individual page.

We currently have 4 established SIGs. There are also discussions beginning with registrants on developing an ACT SIG.

In 2024, there were 4 SIGs:

- Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) – established 2015
- Behaviour Analysis in Schools – established 2022
- ABA and Autism – established Jul 2023
- Business Owners – established Nov 2023

### ***Aims for the Year Ahead***

This year the SIG Lead will continue with the existing objectives:

1. To continue to highlight and approach new groups who work using Behaviour Analytic practice, and encourage them to consider developing a SIG.
2. To continue to encourage those with an interest or research area in new applications of Behaviour Analysis to consider developing a SIG.
3. To ask SIGs to update research lists specific to their area.

4. To ask SIGs to suggest potential stakeholders from their field, to ensure information is effectively disseminated.
5. To ask SIGs to survey the public in their field to gauge knowledge, satisfaction, and suggestions for improving the input of the UK-SBA for the end user.

### ***SIG Lead Summary:***

Adele Yellow holds the role of SIG Lead.

This year, the SIG Lead has focused on developing systems to hold clearer information on SIG members meaning improved checks on registration status and SIG member attendance are now in place. This has also meant easier systems in place for SIG Chairs to provide information and have access to necessary documentation for running the SIGs.

SIG Chair guidance has been updated giving clearer role definitions and expectations which will be released imminently, and this details expectation that SIG Chairs or Co-Chairs will attend AGM meetings moving forward so that registrants are more familiar with the person(s) running the UK-SBA SIGs.

There is also clearer guidance regarding non-registrant SIG members, with more streamlined application processes aiming to encourage collaboration of the field with other professions.

Each SIG Chair completes an annual report for the SIG Lead and this is used to provide the SIG Chair Summaries for this report.

### ***SIG Chair Summaries:***

#### **Positive Behaviour Support**

**SIG Email Address:** [UK-SBA.sig.pbs@gmail.com](mailto:UK-SBA.sig.pbs@gmail.com)

**Name of SIG Chair:** Chloe-Ann Elmer-May

**SIG Co Chair:** Hannah Newcombe

**Membership:** 124 members of the PBS SIG with 18 – 28 members attending each SIG meeting

**Activity:** The PBS SIG has met three times in 2024 with another SIG meeting planned for the end of November.

Each meeting included updating the SIG members of news in PBS such as upcoming continuing education opportunities, discussing current projects members of the SIG are involved in and discussing subjects of interest.

The first meeting of the year was held on the 2nd March and was attended by 18 members. The group discussed various topics during the news in PBS section and then went onto discuss negativity around PBS and how to respond, led by Nick Barratt.

The group discussed some of the negativity they have encountered in relation to PBS and ABA practices. For the aim of the session, we were in agreement that some clear action would be important, initially focusing upon a short-term goal that can inform more long-term goals. The aim therefore was to understand the concerns and develop some guidance for how practitioner can respond to these concerns in a consistent and balanced way. It was recognised that how we respond to professionals who raise concerns would need to be different to how we respond to families.

Nick spoke about how often these misunderstandings stem from misinformation. We need to ensure we remain compassionate around individual experiences, supporting people to raise concerning practices through the correct avenues, but also providing an opportunity to educate, expressing the person-centred nature of PBS. The group then discussed how we could begin to overcome these challenges. We ended this discussion with an appeal to group members (present and reading these minutes) to share any resources that you feel are beneficial and might link in with this process.

Lastly, Hannah and Chloe spoke about their ongoing discussions with Dr Thanos Vostanis from the Tizard Centre around future group publications in the Tizard Learning Disability Review (TLDR). At present we are not pursuing a special edition, but we are hoping to publish some papers by SIG members that can link to the SIG work.

The second meeting of the year took place on 13th June, 22 members attended. Following discussing the news in PBS, Susan E. Tirella presented to the group on defining and applying Assent and Assent withdrawal procedures in behaviour analytic services for Autistic people. The group then spent some time reflecting on the presentation and how to support with implementing these procedures in practice.

The second half of the meeting was spent further developing the ABA Criticisms from Professionals PBS SIG guidance document.

The third meeting of the year took place on the 12th September, with 28 attendees. The group went through the recent news in PBS and also discussed that during this meeting Jo Coulson would provide those that wished a CEU for attending the meeting through PBS Matters.

Nadia Khan (Richmond Fellowship Scotland) and Martin Reilly (NAS) then presented to the group on Enabling Capable Environments: Increasing Quality of Life. This was a really interesting presentation which led to discussions on future potential pilots. The second half of this meeting the group then split into breakout rooms to further review the ABA criticisms from professionals – PBS SIG guidance document.

The final meeting of the year is due to take place on the 28th November 2024. Anthony Cox, Jen Knight and Amy Nash from Supporting Positively will be presenting on building primary level support in a specialist education setting through the application of capable environments followed by the group splitting into some working groups to continue to develop the criticisms from professionals document. We hope to have the first draft of this ready to share with the board by the middle of 2025 to see if this is something they would be interested in publishing more widely as a resource for professionals on behalf of the SIG.

To summarise, the PBS SIG has continued to grow in 2024, with 123 members now on the database. Meetings have continued to be well attended, with a number of new members also joining the meetings. Meetings have felt productive, with a nice balance of knowledge sharing through members presenting and then discussion elements both following the presentations and related to developing the resource.

Four meeting dates have also been set for 2025, these are 6th Feb, 15th May, 4th Sept & 27th Nov.

### Goals for 2025:

Goals	UK-SBA Objective
Conduct research on the effectiveness of PBS	These all align with the broad aims of the UK-SBA to promote behaviour analysis as a field and the support and development of the professionals, researchers and educators active in its various domains. It is recognised that many organisations state that they do PBS however the element of ABA is often missing, the PBS group aims to highlight that without the ABA element organisations are not using the PBS model.
Disseminate information on what PBS should look like	
Link with other PBS groups	

### Mission Statement

The Positive Behaviour Support Special Interest Group (PBS SIG) brings together practitioners, educators, researchers, and students interested in Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and aims to improve the quality of PBS as it is practiced in the UK and to support those involved in its delivery and dissemination.

### Behaviour Analysis in Schools

**SIG Email Address:** [UK-SBA.sig.bainschools@gmail.com](mailto:UK-SBA.sig.bainschools@gmail.com)

**Name of SIG Chair:** Emma Hawkins

**Membership:** 78 members of the SIG.

**Activity:** Three meetings have taken place this year, one per term. Each meeting involves a Heads of Services’ meeting, a practitioners’ meeting and a free CEU event. All meetings have taken place via Microsoft Teams. The date of the next meeting is 28 January 2025 and listed on the UK-SBA website along with a summary of what was covered in the previous meetings.

Topics covered in the Heads of Services meetings this year include equality, diversity and inclusion; post-16 and post-19 transitions; mental capacity assessments; incident/stress management models for staff; autism guidance issued by the Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists; VAT; appraisal/performance management/supervision processes; and frequency of DBS checks.

Topics covered in the Practitioner meetings this year include assent and assent withdrawal; UK-SBA competence framework; strategies for managing racist, homophobic and sexist language; the good behaviour game and the good inclusion game; and how to involve pupils in our research and curriculum planning. The practitioners’ meetings tend to include rolling agenda items of neurodiversity and the UK-SBA competence framework.

The practitioners are also considering publishing a series of research papers in a special issue of the Tizard Learning Disability Review.

The 3 CEU events were held:

- Practical Considerations for Implementing School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) in Mainstream School Settings in the UK - Denise Foran and Millie Blandford-Davies (Lecturers at Bangor University)
- Transforming ABA Practice: A Neuroaffirmative Future – Emma Hawkins (Director of Education at Jigsaw School) and Olivia Kurzeja (Senior Behaviour Analyst at Step by Step School)
- An Investigation into Classwide Inclusive Education Interventions - Scott Graham (PhD Researcher at University of Ulster)

### Goals for 2025:

Goals	UK-SBA Objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To create a network of peer supervision within the field of behaviour analysis; to offer support to colleagues and to problem-solve and find solutions as a team</li> </ul>	<p>The Goals set for 2025 are in keeping with UK-SBA Values and in accordance with the UK-SBA Code of Ethical</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To offer CPD opportunities relevant to the school setting (within meetings and the CEU events)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure our practice is neuro-affirming</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide guidance to one another regarding the UK-SBA competence framework to ensure consistency in supervision across settings</li> </ul>	

## **Mission Statement**

The Behaviour Analysis in Schools SIG aims to be a group that promotes the development of high standards of practise in the application of behaviour analytic principles in schools in the UK. Our mission includes:

- Promoting a network for professionals and practitioners in both behaviour analysis and school settings
- Promoting knowledge and understanding of behaviour analytic approaches within all school contexts (i.e., both mainstream settings and those supporting learners with additional needs)
- Supporting existing and emerging schools and units to include behaviour analytic practices (e.g., Functional Behaviour Assessments, School Wide Positive Behaviour Support, Precision Teaching, and classroom management strategies)
- Promoting and generating new research within school settings
- Contributing to the development of standards for behaviour analytic service delivery and accreditation within schools

Our mission links directly with the mission and objectives of UK-SBA across four key domains:

- Promoting the recognition of behaviour analysis as a scientific approach in all school settings
- Contributing to the development of standards in education, training and experience in the principles, practice and skills of behaviour analysts
- Communicating and sharing information about behaviour analysis to other educational providers
- Promoting and generating new research

## **ABA and Autism**

**SIG Email Address:** [UK-SBA.sig.autism@gmail.com](mailto:UK-SBA.sig.autism@gmail.com)

**Name of SIG Chair:** Sarah Martin

**Membership** – 26 members of the SIG with 7 attending the meeting this year

**Activity** - The ABA and Autism SIG have met once this year due to circumstances out of the Chairs control. The SIG lead is aware of this circumstance and has approved not meeting quota for this year. The SIG Chair has been responsive to communication and is update with new initiatives involving new systems in place.

At the meeting in May 2024, we discussed the purpose of the SIG and how to meet the needs of the members. We agreed that future meetings will focus on peer supervision topics, journal and article discussions, and UK-SBA supervision standards discussions. It is hoped that CEUs may be available for some of these meetings. Future meetings will also be held during working hours to try to increase attendance.

Following the meeting, we created and displayed a poster to advertise the SIG at the UK-SBA summer conference in July 2024.

We shared our first edition of our SIG newsletter with members in July 2024. The newsletter shared links to the latest UK-SBA updates, resources and recently published articles; and included a spotlight on one of our SIG members services. It is hoped that we will be able to publish our newsletter every 3-6 months. Our newsletter working group have met separately to put this together and it is hoped that more members will be able to contribute in the future.

In July 2024 we also created and shared a questionnaire for members, with the purpose of understanding the demographics and needs of the members better. The questionnaire was sent to 30 members, and we had 10 responses. Of the members who completed the questionnaire; 60% listed peer supervision and support as their main reason for joining, 20% listed to build connections with fellow professionals, and the remaining 20% listed to access and share research and journals. All members who completed the questionnaire listed 'hearing from autistic voices' and 'compassionate and values-based ABA' as topics they'd like to cover at future meetings.

In October 2024, we responded to the UK-SBA's request for input regarding job titles. We were able to provide a list of some of the titles held by our current members to help improve the registration process.

**Goals for 2025:**

Goals	UK-SBA Objective
1. To establish a bank of up to date and relevant research, particularly that pertinent to the UK, which can be shared on the SIG website.	Our goals fit with the objectives of the UK-SBA to promote ethical and effective applications of behaviour analysis, develop and promote evidence-based practises, and support the growth of the science of behaviour analysis.
2. To hold regular peer supervision to discuss issues pertinent to practitioners working with individuals with a diagnosis of autism e.g., working within schools.	
3. To regularly share articles and research in the form of a regular email newsletter.	

**Mission Statement**

Our mission is to develop a network of professionals who have an interest in or are working with individuals who have a diagnosis of autism using an ABA approach. We aim to promote high standards in ABA services, collate and share research and provide networking and opportunities for professional development within this area.

## Business Owners SIG

**SIG Email Address:** [UK-SBA.sig.ababusinessowners@gmail.com](mailto:UK-SBA.sig.ababusinessowners@gmail.com)

**Name of SIG Chair:** Veronica Dunning

**Membership:** 9 members of the SIG with 3 to 5 members attending SIG meetings

**Activity:** Our SIG met 3 times this year. Our first meeting was in January 2024, and we introduced ourselves and went through the initial SIG joining guidelines. At this point we had not submitted information for our website, so we worked on this during this meeting. We discussed roles and sharing tasks in the group, as well as social media representation. We addressed confidentiality and the need for a database for our members.

Our second meeting was in July 2024, and we reviewed the wording for the SIG web page. We established criteria for the approval of the SIG content, our WhatsApp group, and we discussed criteria for joining our SIG although we did not make any decisions about this (whether solopreneurs vs employers would be accepted). We designed our own registration form following that meeting (As we did not have a form sent by the UK SBA at that time).

We had a guest speaker at our 3rd SIG meeting. Dr. Yulema Cruz (USA). This was an open mike session where we had case scenarios and Yulema supported rich reflections on our practices as businesses. Questions raised included:

- 1- Having to deliver a 'master's degree' worth of work to people who we hire that do well in interviews and appear qualified.
- 2- Hiring the right people but not being able to provide the right opportunities for them, then losing them.
- 3- Increased admin/HR time for small businesses due to level of staff support which is unrealistic for the size of our business.
- 4- Staff going through interview and saying the right things, passing with high scores but failing when doing the job.

Reflexions from Dr. Yulema Cruz:

- When we look at staff retention, we need to analyse our own behaviour and how much staff want to work for us.
- Simultaneously focus on personal and professional goals for our staff. As leaders our staff can rely on us for that support. Examples of personal goals in a work context: E.g. Higher education, Higher pay? Help for their child to go to school.
- A survey Yulema carried out with Behaviour Technicians pointed out that 'support' was the most important aspect of their jobs for behaviour technicians.
- We need to operationally define support.
- Mistake we can make: Assuming what support means to our staff.



We also discussed hiring a good match, finding the best fit, collaboration and qualified and experienced ABA business owners support in the UK.

We set up our SIG database and our files have been transferred to our own SIG Dropbox.

### Goals for 2025:

Goals	UK-SBA Objective
1. Qualitative: 1- To start discussions with the aim to plan a bank of information, and appropriate guidance for ABA business owners, as a UK society. This will be achieved by us listening to ABA Business needs in the UK.	<b>Protect:</b> We promote a culture of continuous improvement and ethical decision-making to ensure the public is safe from harm.
2. To start discussions on the current state of ABA in the UK specific context and barriers to behaviour analytical practice. This will enable us to discuss future goals as service providers.	<b>Support:</b> We assist the public in finding quality behaviour analytic services and encourage communication between the UK-SBA and the community
3. To compile a database of experienced ABA Business mentors (and potential suppliers) who can support UK ABA businesses more closely, when this support is required (Measurable).	<b>Promote:</b> We support research in behaviour analysis and encourage ongoing professional development of our members to facilitate ethical, effective and evidence-based practice.
4. To compile a list of OBM/ABA Business specific literature and training which promote ethics, supervision, integration, recruitment and staff retention and which would be suitable for UK ABA businesses.	<b>Train:</b> We arrange training opportunities that allow professionals and the public to access the science and practice of behaviour analysis in a way that is relevant and useful to their personal or professional circumstances.

### Mission Statement

The mission of the ABA Business Owners SIG is to support ABA business owners in the UK to provide high quality and ethical behaviour analytical services that have a positive impact on service users, their own staff and the wider community, in a collaborative manner.