

ECA 25 Nottingham – Post-Conference Report

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Highlight Key Aspects of the Conference

The ECA conference offered a range of engaging sessions and workshops that were highly relevant to my current studies and future development. A particularly impactful session was the EDI-focused workshop, which highlighted the importance of inclusive language and precise terminology in anatomical education. It emphasised the responsibility we have as educators and students to ensure equality and respect in how anatomy is taught.

Another workshop explored the evolution of teaching methods, comparing traditional approaches with emerging technologies such as virtual reality (VR). I found this especially relevant, as VR holds strong potential for enhancing spatial understanding and accessibility. I also participated in a hands-on clay modelling workshop focused on forearm musculature, which introduced a creative and effective method for learning anatomical relationships.

Among the presentations, Cat Irving's "Things in Jars" stood out as a reflective exploration of anatomical preservation history. Her talk illustrated how ongoing developments in ethics, language, and technique continue to shape the future of anatomy. Another presentation that resonated with me called for greater recognition of anatomy technicians and their essential role in education—something I found especially inspiring as I consider future roles in this field.

Impact of the ECA Fund

Receiving the ECA bursary made it financially possible for me to attend the conference in person, covering essential travel and accommodation expenses. As an undergraduate based in Glasgow, attending a multi-day event in Nottingham would not have been feasible without this support. The bursary enabled me to fully participate in the conference and present my undergraduate research as part of the scientific programme. Sharing my work with an academic audience was both exciting and rewarding, and the feedback I received has helped me reflect on future research directions.

In addition, the event allowed me to connect with students, researchers, and professionals in anatomical education. These conversations gave me clearer insight into possible career paths—particularly in teaching and technical roles—and helped me feel more confident about pursuing anatomy as a long-term academic and professional focus.

Personal Reflections

Attending the ECA conference was a genuinely formative experience for me, particularly as it was my first time presenting at an academic conference. I was quite nervous before my presentation, but the supportive environment and encouragement from attendees helped me build confidence in speaking about my research. It was an important step in developing my communication skills, which I know will be valuable in both academic and professional contexts. Beyond presenting, I learned a great deal from observing other participants' talks—not just in terms of academic content, but also presentation styles, structure, and audience engagement techniques. These observations gave me practical insight into how to deliver more effective and impactful presentations in the future.

Interacting with professionals and students across different career stages also gave me a clearer understanding of the many pathways within anatomy as a discipline. It also gave me greater clarity about my own career direction—whether in teaching, anatomical technical work, or research—and I now feel more confident about actively pursuing opportunities in these areas.

This experience has strengthened my motivation to continue in this field and to remain engaged with the ECA community through future events and contributions.

