

James is the students' favourite

James Munro, who is a psychology technician at Edinburgh Napier's School of Applied Sciences beat off competition from other UK scientists and was top in a UK online contest.

This [competition](#) allows school students to vote for their favourite scientist after challenging them in online text chats. James answered 75 forum questions and 500 live chat questions posed to him by 12-17 year olds from up to 20 schools.

He was asked questions ranging from 'Do you enjoy what you do?' to 'How do mirror neurons work?'

James said : "I loved every part of this competition. I would do it as a full-time job if possible. Actually, the best part of my current job is being approachable as a source of information and assistance by staff and students, so I guess my wish has been granted in a way!

"The live chat questions were manic and chaotic and wonderful. I told the I'm a Scientist team that if I could do the live chats full-time as a job, I would. Imagine 30 minutes with 20-30 pupils who fire questions at you, followed up by polite responses and further questions. Imagine one pupil asking you if you would do things different in another life, followed by a pupil asking you what part of the brain deals with emotions. Then yet another asking you something more sensitive about sexuality or suicide. It was thrilling and I'm sad it is over. If I could design classes at University to work in the same

way, I would.

“With the prize money in mind, I’m currently approaching organisations that make science accessible and entertaining to adults all around Edinburgh with the hope that they might be persuaded to put on some school-pupil focused events – Edinburgh Napier is not short of excellent science communicators! The most important thing is to put the money towards encouraging everyone to have a go at STEM if they want to – not just the usual suspects.

“Technicians are a highly skilled, dedicated and often hidden group of people. We are rarely the first name you find on big papers, or likely to win the prestigious awards. Opportunities to assist, engage and share knowledge with others is a big part of what drives us to do what we do. I think that is something worthy of recognition. So cheers to I’m a Scientist, and for all those at Edinburgh Napier who encourage opportunities like this.”

James was overall winner of the I’m a Scientist Get me out of here zone and won £500 to spend on Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) outreach.



James Munro