

Visual Dysfunction Group

The SAAL also houses a group of researchers and projects interested in the role of visual dysfunction, visual stress and cortical hyperexcitability underlying perceptual distortions, hallucination and aura.

Our lab is currently devising new stimuli, methods, and paradigms for the assessment of cortical hyperexcitability in both clinical and non-clinical populations. Examples include; (i) visual dysfunction in migraine and migraine aura; (ii) cortical hyperexcitability in people showing signs of perceptual aberration in schizotypy; (iii) visual cortical hyperexcitability and anomalous bodily experiences; (iv) visual suppression in dissociative disorders; (v) depersonalization disorder and perceptual / emotional suppression. Cortical hyperexcitability is also being explored in relation to hallucination proneness in non-clinical samples and new computer-based methods have been designed for screening participants on these measures. These new and exciting techniques extend such screening far beyond that of subjective questionnaire measures alone and add new empirical and objective ways to examine the processes underlying predisposition to anomalous experiences across a range of conditions and disorders.