The Future of Education: Learning throughout the Life Course

Annual Conference hosted by
The School of Education and Childhood Studies
in collaboration with the Higher Education Forum

Monday, 10 July 2017
Portland Building

Keynote Speakers

Professor Nigel Thomas,
University of Central Lancashire

Professor Kalwant Bhopal,
University of Birmingham
Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you on behalf of the School of Education and Childhood Studies and the Higher Education Forum at the University of Portsmouth. This annual conference is an opportunity to bring together education researchers, practitioners, and research students. Through the keynotes, presentations, and discussions today, we come together as researchers and practitioners from across the spectrum of educational experiences and practices throughout the life course, from education and development in early childhood through to lifelong learning in post-retirement. Our aim for today is to foster discussions broadly around current issues in education and what our current research and practices can tell us about the future of education.

We hope you enjoy the day!
Dr Wendy Sims-Schouten, Reader in Childhood Studies
Dr Jessica Gagnon, Senior Research Fellow in Higher Education Studies

With special thanks to Jackie Jefferson, Kim Collins, Amanda Jones, Sandra Kerr and the administrative team for providing support to make this conference possible.

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School of Education and Childhood Studies: @UoPSECS
Higher Education Forum: @UoPHEForum

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About the School of Education and Childhood Studies
A career in the education sector allows you to work in a vital and fascinating field. Whether you are aiming to be a teacher, a trainer, an administrator or an early years practitioner, the School of Education and Childhood Studies provides the ideal environment for you to undertake your study.

We offer a wide range of courses, from professional development training to undergraduate, masters’ and doctoral degrees. The staff comprises a team of respected lecturers and researchers with specialisms that embrace theoretical excellence and practical experience. On our PGCE Initial Teacher Training courses, you may either take a professional or postgraduate approach to teacher training, and you can be supported by subject knowledge enhancement courses in several fields if needed.

Regular inspections by Ofsted and the Quality Assurance Authority have confirmed Portsmouth as an excellent provider of courses in education and childhood studies, a position supported by strong performance in league tables and the National Student Survey.

Courses currently on offer:

**Undergraduate:**
- Foundation Degree (Arts) Early Years Care & Education
- Foundation Degree (Arts) Learning Support
- BA (Hons) Education and Training Studies (Top up degree)
- BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies
- BA (Hons) Childhood and Youth Studies with Psychology
- BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies
- BA (Hons) Early Childhood Studies with Psychology

**Postgraduate:**
- MSc Educational Leadership and Management
- MA Education Studies
- MRes in Education
- MRes in Childhood Studies
- EdD - Professional Doctorate in Education
- PhD

**Professional:**
- PGCE Business Studies, Computer Science, English, Geography, Maths, MFL and Science
- PGCE Further Education and Training
- Early Years Initial Teacher Training
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<td><strong>Professor Nigel Thomas</strong>, University of Central Lancashire</td>
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<td>‘<em>Human beings need something from one another when they come to places like schools</em>: participation, recognition and wellbeing</td>
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<td><strong>Professor Kalwant Bhopal</strong>, University of Birmingham</td>
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<td><em>BME academic flight from UK higher education</em></td>
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<td><strong>Closing Plenary</strong>&lt;br&gt;Panellists:&lt;br&gt;Professor Nigel Thomas&lt;br&gt;Professor Kalwant Bhopal&lt;br&gt;Dr Wendy Sims-Schouten&lt;br&gt;Session Chair: Dr Jessica Gagnon</td>
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<td><strong>Wine Reception</strong>&lt;br&gt;Book launch for <em>Rethinking Social Issues in Education for the 21st Century: UK Perspectives on International Concerns</em> and celebration of recent publications</td>
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Morning Keynote

Professor Nigel Thomas

Nigel Thomas is Professor of Childhood and Youth Research in the School of Social Work, Care and Community at University of Central Lancashire. His research with children and young people includes child welfare, children’s rights and theories of childhood, with a particular focus on children and young people’s participation. He has worked with children in care, young carers, school pupils and members of youth councils, using a range of innovative methods. He is co-director and co-founder of The Centre for Children and Young People’s Participation. For seven years he co-edited the journal Children & Society, whose editorial board he now chairs. He is internationally known for his work on children and young people’s participation, and recently featured in the book Key Thinkers in Childhood Studies. He is an Adjunct Professor in the Centre for Children and Young People at Southern Cross University, New South Wales, and a Fellow of the Institute of Welsh Affairs.

Keynote: ‘Human Beings Need Something from One Another when they come to Places Like Schools’: Participation, Recognition and Wellbeing

Abstract: How does student participation contribute to wellbeing? Children’s rights to participation are clearly established in the CRC, but can it also be shown to be good for them, and for their schools? Newly published research in Australian schools aimed to explore the connections between different aspects of participation and measures of wellbeing, and the part played by intersubjective recognition (Honneth, 1995) in those connections. Focus groups with students and interviews with teachers produced rich insights and went on to inform a large online survey. The results demonstrate clear and specific links between participation and wellbeing, and also point to recognition as a mediator of those links. In this keynote lecture I will explain the results and discuss what they mean, both for practice in schools and for our theoretical understanding of how participation is grounded in interpersonal relationships.
Kalwant Bhopal is Professor of Education and Social Justice and Bridge Professorial Research Fellow in the Centre for Research in Race and Education in the School of Education at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on the achievements and experiences of minority ethnic groups in education. She has conducted research on exploring discourses of identity and intersectionality examining the lives of Black minority ethnic groups as well as examining the marginal position of Gypsies and Travellers. Her research specifically explores how processes of racism, exclusion and marginalisation operate in predominantly White spaces with a focus on social justice and inclusion. She is Visiting Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Kings College London (Department of Education and Professional Studies). She has been Visiting Professor at Queens University, Belfast and Visiting Scholar at the UCL Institute of Education, London.

**Keynote: BME Academic Flight from UK Higher Education**

Abstract: This presentation will explore inequalities in higher education for those from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. It will examine the experiences of BME academics who consider moving overseas for career opportunities. It explores the barriers that BME academics report in UK higher education, which affect their decisions for overseas higher education migration. The presentation will draw on research funded by the Equality Challenge Unit which found that BME academics were significantly more likely than White academics to have considered moving overseas to work. Many respondents reported various barriers to career progression, such as processes of racism, exclusion and marginalisation. The study suggests that significant change is needed in the UK higher education sector in order to retain BME academics who consider moving overseas.

Twitter: @KalwantBhopal
Parallel Session 1: Mental Health, Wellbeing, and Supporting Students

Evaluating Mental Health Literacy, Help Seeking Behaviours, and Mental Health Outcomes in UK University Students: A Country Wide Study
Dr Paul Gorczynski, University of Portsmouth
Dr Clare Wilson, University of Portsmouth
Dr Wendy Sims-Schouten, University of Portsmouth
Twitter: @DrWendySch

Despite high prevalence of mental health problems amongst UK university students, nationwide surveys have shown that less than half seek help. Previous research that has examined mental health literacy amongst students at one UK university has shown that greater knowledge of mental health problems is significantly positively correlated with help seeking intentions. The aim of this study was to gain a UK wide perspective on levels of mental health literacy amongst university students and to examine the relationship between mental health literacy and mental health help seeking behaviours. A total of 300 UK university students completed online questionnaires on mental health literacy, help seeking behaviours, and mental health outcomes. The findings from this study showed that students in the UK have low levels of mental health literacy. In total, 78% of participants indicated mild or more severe symptoms of distress. Overall, no significant correlations were found between mental health literacy and help seeking behaviours. Furthermore, mental health literacy was not correlated with distress, mental wellbeing, or self-compassion. Although universities should not stop offering mental health literacy programming, institutional strategies, like curriculum changes, are needed to address high rates of distress amongst students.

Student Wellbeing and Mental Health: Pressure Points and Transitions in the Student Lifecycle
Dr Denise Meyer, University of Portsmouth

How does mental health and wellbeing affect learning? How might an understanding of the emotional effects of transitions and pressure points in the student lifecycle contribute to more effective and supportive teaching? From the perspective of experience in student wellbeing support, the presentation will provide an overview of pressure points and transitions in the student lifecycle, from recruitment through to the beginning of the alumni relationship, showing how wellbeing is relevant to student learning at each stage. As well as the main transition points experienced by traditional young entrants leaving home and school to meet new social and learning challenges, there may be additional or unique pressures for those with less traditional routes or from particular widening participation backgrounds, or minority groups. Students with mental health difficulties may in addition experience added challenges, including the transition from child to adult mental services, continuity of care from home to university, and expectations of support from schools and parents versus the reality of higher education resources. The presentation will consider ways in which learning from wellbeing might be embedded within transition and induction arrangements, as well as throughout the student lifecycle, in order to support more effective and successful learning.
Reframing Student Support Discourses: Towards a Holistic Equitable Approach
Dr Jessica Gagnon, University of Portsmouth
Twitter: @Jess_Gagnon

“The large amount of support that’s available if you start falling behind say in the work. There’s a vast amount that you can get to help you catch up, do better” -- Focus group participant talking about the factors that influenced their decision to choose their university. This presentation builds upon Quinn’s (2010) suggestion that we should reframe the discourses around the provision of student support in higher education away from the notion that students who access support are “needy” and more towards a discourse of equity. Support services should be seen as part of ensuring that each student has ‘the right to enter university successfully and succeed. This is a common right of all students, but structural disadvantage ensures that many students require support if they are to take up this entitlement’ (Quinn, 2010, p. 125). Using quantitative and qualitative data from an on-going research project focused on induction, transitions, and the student experience, I will make a case for a reframing of student support discourses. In addition to existing literature, I will draw on data from a university-wide survey distributed to first year students in autumn 2016, with 678 respondents, and on data from focus groups that were conducted in autumn 2016 and spring 2017 with 44 undergraduate participants.

Parallel Session 2: International Perspectives

What Happens when Teachers Reflect? A Nigerian Encounter.
Dr Timi Hyacinth, Afrisage, Nigeria

Reflection may be a relatively new phenomenon in many African teachers' practice or is it? In Nigeria, it may be fashionable to speak about reflection but the teacher education curriculum still needs to integrate reflective practice as an essential part of teacher preparation. One Nigerian teacher told me that all Nigerian teachers reflect; depending on what they are reflecting on: their conditions of service or their professional practice. Reflection may mean one thing to one person and something else to another. The focus of my PhD study was on how Nigerian teachers used reflection in their practice. Was it structured or intuitive or both? Where there was reflection what really happened, how did it happen and why? The study was carried out over several months in which I had varying encounters. I met the teacher who viewed reflection as gathering information, and the one for whom reflection could not exist beyond the school gate. For another reflection moved from school into personal lifestyle. I also encountered those for whom reflection was practice. A range of methods were used to tease out what happens when Nigerian teachers reflect.
Evaluating the Impact of International Training Programs for Nigerian Educators
Dr Stella Adagiri, Portsbridge Educational Services
Dr Sylvia Horton, University of Portsmouth

This presentation is based on a study of a series of bespoke training programs delivered by a training organisation in the UK to groups of Nigerian educators from different levels of education during 2015/16. The overarching aim of the research was to gain an understanding of how, if at all, learning that takes place is transferred to educational organisations that have been represented in the programmes. A systematic stakeholder approach for evaluating the programmes drawing from Kirkpatrick’s and Guskey’s models was adopted which aimed to assess the impact of the training on the trainees, the staff and management of their respective organisations and the organisations overall. The longitudinal study adopted a mixed methodological approach using both questionnaires and interviews and was based on four training events. Findings suggest a significant interest in professional development among Nigerian educators, and in particular, exposure to good practices in western educational contexts. Feedback on the benefits and outcomes of the programmes in terms of learning was very positive with some examples of Implementation, however, institutional barriers were also identified. The presentation concludes with suggestions and strategies to ensure more effective implementation and a model for evaluation.

Parallel Session 3: Early Childhood/Primary Perspectives

The Perception of Play in Early Years Education in Nigeria: Experience at Treasure Box Centre
Mrs Lami Tinam Gidado, The Treasure Box PreSchool, Jos Nigeria
Dr Stella Adagiri, Portsbridge Educational Services

Early years settings in Nigeria have faced a significant pressure from both parents and educators as the focus seem to be more on academic work and performance. Child centred play environment in nurseries are being replaced with tables, chairs, books, writing material and tests. At an early age of 18 months, there is already an expectation from parents for their children to learn the core component of what is perceived as ‘good education’, which centres on reading and writing. Hence children are immersed in intensive academic work, at a premature age. Emphasising play in early years settings, is often perceived as a waste of money and time, given the high expectation and competitive educational contexts. This presentation is based upon an experience at an early years setting in Nigeria, which reveals the challenges faced by early years practitioners, attitudes of parents and impact on children, as the role of play is being explored and introduced as a fundamental part of learning and child development. It highlights the intervention by the nursery and the impact on children and perception of teachers.
A Comparative Study of Teacher Identity in Private Schools and State Schools at Primary Level in Shandong Province in China
Ms Haoran Liu, University of Oxford

Teacher’s professional identities is understood as the ways “teachers define themselves to themselves and to others” (Lasky, 2005:30), focusing attention on the process and strategies that teachers’ employ in making sense of the changes and challenges of work in state and private schools. In this presentation, I will briefly review some of the major features of the social and educational trends in primary education in County N in China and set the context for this research study, situating the discussion amid the current issues in schools and educational work and the ways changes and challenges are being played out in local contexts. I will then outline the research design and methodology for studying teachers' professional identities. Following this I will consider the ways in which teachers’ work is organised to structure and support their learning and development in schools, drawing out how institutional and school contexts can facilitate or limit identity formation. Using grounded theory as an analytical tool, I will advocate a process approach to understanding identity changes. This leads to the use of a narrative inquiry in this study. The final chapter concludes with initial findings based on the analysis of work narratives for six state school teachers in this study.

How can Universities Support Primary Teachers in the Delivery of Practical Science Lessons?
Dr Alessandro Siani, University of Portsmouth

It is widely acknowledged that practical lessons have a key role in science education across all age groups. However, recent surveys have highlighted the relative weakness in pupils’ skills of scientific enquiry in primary schools, indicating that the recorded good or outstanding achievement in science may be skewed by the assessment of theoretical rather than practical learning. Although the causes of the observed shortage/inadequacy of practical lessons in the delivery of the primary science curriculum may be difficult to pinpoint due to their inherently multifactorial nature, a tentative explanation could be attempted on the base of the analysis of the primary teaching workforce. As primary teachers are expected to teach all subjects, there is little information on their subject specialism. However, it has been estimated that no more than 3% of primary teachers have a degree in a scientific subject. Academic institutions should strive to gain insight on the factors undermining the enquiry-based delivery of the primary science curriculum. A deeper understanding of those factors is essential in order to devise and deploy targeted strategies to support primary teachers with a non-scientific background.
Parallel Session 4: Higher Education Perspectives

Learning Partnership: Embedding a Model that Reinforces Personal and Professional Development.
Mx Madeline Worsley, University of Portsmouth
Twitter: @madelineworsley

Exploring the process of partnership in action. The Learning Partnership (LP) is being gradually embedded across the institution, supporting the delivery of The University of Portsmouth’s Education Strategy. The aim is to understand what reinforces a learning community. When students and staff collaborate to broadly enhance learning and teaching there is a correlation between the wider impact on the student/staff experience and the impact this process has on professional and personal skills development. The recognition of this impact is linked to reinforcing a sense of involvement and ‘belonging’ thus leading to a deeper understanding and awareness of one's own development needs. Establishing a learning partnership environment enables staff/students to co-create and co-design. This collaboration and co-ownership fosters a sense of trust and respect that develops into a working model of a learning community. When this process is embedded in the curriculum and the culture of the institution, then the emerging learning and teaching innovations/enhancements are highly valued.

Motorways to Success, or B Roads of Confusion? Student Desire for Mobility and Credit Transfer and the Potential for New Routes for Widening Participation.
Mr Samuel Dent, University of Sheffield
Twitter: @SRDent89

Mobility is a contested concept in research connected with widening participation (WP). As Finn (2016) has argued, the ability to relocate for study is seen as a core part of the student experience, with those students who don’t becoming framed as ‘immobile’. This framing taking place in ways which reinforce negative dichotomises around “mobile/immobile; traditional/non-traditional”. This sits contra to current policy, which frames mobility between institutions, through processes such as credit transfer, as a positive activity for students. Here the Government suggests credit transfer offers an opportunity to improve choice; widening participation by meeting a latent demand amongst students to switch universities, and, therefore, improving quality and choice (BIS 2016; DfE 2016). However existing research rarely considers widening participation and student attitudes in this context, instead focusing on the technical and administrative questions of the value of credit (UUK 2004; UUK 2008; Souto-Otero 2012). This paper explores the concept of student mobility, as the means and desire to move universities. It seeks to establish the extent to which there is demand for this among students, and how greater mobility can support their access, retention and widening participation in HE. The study reports on a one year research project, funded by the HEFCE, finishing in May 2016, conducted at a consortium of 6 universities in the North of England during the 2016/17 academic year. This research argues that students demand for mobility is present in the data; however the extent to which this would be utilised is questionable, as reflections from students on the perceived value of mobility echoes the binaries Finn suggests. Furthermore there is also little evidence from the study that greater mobility is desired from students from WP backgrounds, and the financial implications of mobility may, in fact, exclude students from WP target groups from engaging in these processes.
Economic Fundamentalism, Policy Making and the Zombification of Education
Mr Nadim Bakhshov, University of Portsmouth
Twitter: @nadimbakhshov

This paper reflects upon and develops a key argument laid out in my first book, ‘Against Capitalist Education’ (Zero Books, 2015). My claim, in my book, is that there is a systemic miscategorisation and obfuscation (Kojève, 1980) of the real threat to educational freedom and integrity. The consequences are visible through successive governmental policies, constant reconfiguration of funding regimes, the drive behind the TEF and the hegemonic role of NSS in quality discourses at governance level of educational institutions. Critically, this has led to a profound acceleration in the dehumanisation of educational value, resulting in what I term the zombification (Luckhurst, 2016) of pedagogy and thinking. The resultant impact at the level of the individual practitioner is nothing less than the symbolic castration (Lacan, 1938) of the teacher in public discourse. The consequences for lifelong learning, the development of a culturally literate and politically engaged society are huge. My contention is that the defense and return of the ‘philosophical’ sciences (Fichte, 2005) to the heart of schooling and university provides a non-partisan platform to develop a counter-narrative to the prevailing dominance of the natural, mathematical, engineering and technological sciences.

Parallel Session 5: Inclusion and Diversity in Education

Beyond Tolerance: Celebrating Difference in Schools
Mrs Josephine Morgan, The Portsmouth Grammar School
Twitter: @PGS_Pride

Imagine a school where difference is not simply tolerated but celebrated. A school where pupils and staff are openly lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender (LGBT+), where the most popular society celebrates gay pride, where sex education addresses the needs of all pupils; a school where every person has the right to have pride in who they are. The Stonewall school report of 2012 showed that nearly one in four young LGBT people have attempted suicide and over half have self-harmed. More recently, Pride in London’s research showed that 74 per cent of LGBT people hide their sexual orientation or gender identity, with 77 per cent feeling uncomfortable in being their true selves in public (against 23 per cent of the general population) – this is unacceptable and unnecessary. The Portsmouth Grammar School has demonstrated the positive impact of embracing LGBT+ rights, culture and difference on all of our stakeholders. This cultural shift has had a profound impact on the experience of our pupils, staff and parents. Come to this talk to find out how we’ve made these changes and join us in our quest to truly celebrate difference.
Scottish and Chinese Children’s Experiences of Gender in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)
Mr Yuwei Xu, University of Portsmouth
Twitter: @YuweiXu

This paper will explore children’s experiences of gender in early childhood settings, by virtue of their interactions with male and female early childhood practitioners. The paper (as part of a larger project) observed teacher-child interactions in 17 ECEC settings in Scotland, Hong Kong and Mainland China, where there were both male and female early childhood practitioners teaching the same group of children in each setting. Those children (aged 3-6) in all three cultures were also invited to an individual conversation with the researcher facilitated by three pictures that present culturally gendered and non-gendered teacher behaviours, so as to gain their perspectives of male and female early childhood practitioners in terms of their daily activities and needs in ECEC classrooms. Observational and conversational data were analysed in a joint manner to find out how children experience gender in their daily interactions with teachers, and beyond. Findings of this research suggest that gender is among a wide range of social aspects that children 'do' and 'undo' to gain pleasure/fun and to meet their needs in their interactions/experiences with male and female teachers. Those findings therefore imply that teachers, being both male and female, should be trained about gender-reflective practices in order to cater for children's variable needs.

Reintegrating School Excluded Young People: Some Initial Reflections
Dr Keiron Hatton, University of Portsmouth
Dr Catherine Brennan, Releasing Potential

This paper will examine initial findings from a small scale research study which examines the experience of young people who have been school excluded. The focus of the study is a third sector organisation which provides an intensive intervention over 8 weeks which seeks to support young people who are experiencing difficulty in the school environment to become reintegrated into the school from which they have been referred. Interviews were conducted with the young people, their parents and the pastoral care teacher who referred the young person. Initial findings suggest that through a focus on young people's decision making, their sense of anger and their self-identification as 'naughty' the organisation to which they have been referred can secure meaningful change in their behaviour which can facilitate their reintegration into their school.

The authors will seek to explain this change through a focus on young people as agents who have the capacity to change and by examining the barriers to such changes across the family, young person and the school. It is suggested that the neo-liberal education agenda that frames the educational experience is a major factor in the increased use of exclusion as a strategy to manage young people's behaviour.
Parallel Session 6: Intersections of Education and Childhood Identities in Pakistan, Mozambique, and India

The Global Education, Childhoods, and Outreach (GECO) research cluster in the School of Education and Childhood Studies at the University of Portsmouth presents a panel discussion on the relationships between children’s identities and the ways in which they are taught to fulfil their expected roles in society. Childhood is experienced at the intersections of a child’s identities, which are often given values through the discourses and structures that exist within different societies.

**Pakistan:** Dr Ann Emerson will discuss how citizenship narratives are reproduced through curriculum and school practice in a girls’ secondary school in Pakistan. Schooling is not neutral, which is often believed, but according to critical educationalists including Michael Apple and Henry Giroux, serves as a reproducer of social and economic divisions, and teaches students their expected roles in society based in the intersection of their identity. This research was carried out in Pakistan, where citizenship has been defined based on religion, gender, ethnicity and class. The data was collected in girls’ secondary school through both textbook analysis and a case study of the day-to-day practice of the school both in and out of the classrooms. The formal learning through curriculum the pedagogy, and the incidental learning done through being a part of the school community, contribute to the students’ understandings of what it means to be a citizen. The findings suggests that the resulting narratives position students within a gendered and classed notion of citizenship which has the potential to limit their agency as citizens.

**Mozambique:** Dr Francesca Salvi will discuss how institutional practices reproduce and operationalise specific discourses of in-school pregnancy and motherhood in Mozambique. By looking at the different ways of policing the body and regulating pregnancy occurrences in the classroom, Francesca represents schools as Foucauldian institutions. Within this context, school practices aim at extending the regulatory gaze at the different levels of the school body (teachers, teachers committees and prefects). The result of these practices is the reproduction of a specific institutional regime that defines pupils’ identities along the dimensions of gender and age, where their (hetero)sexuality and seniority identify power. This talk will also emphasise how young people express resistance: while being constructed by discursive norms, pregnant schoolgirls also resist and react to such norms. For instance, by means of resisting the regulatory gaze, they oppose being produced along a specific identity regime. At the same time, they may invoke a different normative framework. The data discussed in this talk suggest that pregnant schoolgirls navigate different regulatory frameworks in the production of their own identities. This act identifies an attempt at being in control of themselves, and, as a consequence, at exerting their own agency.

**India:** Dr Angie Dharmaraj-Savicks will consider how socio-cultural influences such as caste and gender defined within the policy implementation structure interrupt policy interpretation and practice in rural India. The reflection of such influences in the attainment of education policy objectives of the educational reform Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (campaign for universal education) through local level educational leaders will be discussed. The presentation will highlight how: economic structures are triggered by class structures and increase distributive injustice, disallowing people the resources they need to participate with others as peers; institutional hierarchy can cause status inequality or misrecognition through cultural values and thereby hinder parity; and political dimensions of inequality, that in many ways constitute and determine the reach/access to both distributive and recognition inequality, could determine who is included, who is excluded and those who should be provided with greater equality through distribution and recognition. The roles and power defined by society and the impact on education made available for children in marginalised communities will be discussed.
Parallel Session 7: Policies, Identities and Education

REF 2020 Outputs and Post-1992 Universities: The Death of the Real
Dr Martin Myers, University of Portsmouth
Twitter: @DrMartinMyers

One measurement used in the Research Excellence Framework 2014 and its predecessor the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise was outputs, (such as peer-reviewed journal articles), associated with individual academics. Along with other institutional measurements these were used to directly apportion funding for future research. The relationship between individual academics, their outputs and institutional affiliation was effectively an economy in which outputs represented a form of intellectual capital. Like other forms of capital, outputs had a transferrable value for academic authors; one that facilitated career opportunities. Since 2014 the capital value of outputs has devalued, for example within institutional led proposals made in the Stern Review (2016) for the 2020 REF. More subtly universities have developed public narratives of successful REF results which devalue individual contributions by claiming the vast majority of their research is ‘world leading’ or of ‘international importance’. This paper argues there has been an observable transition from academic outputs being recognised for their symbolic value and the potency of their intellectual contribution, towards their consumption within ‘economies of signs’ (Baudrillard 1993, 2005). Divested of symbolic value (Bataille, 1988) or an auratic presence (Benjamin, 1999) the output becomes a marginal commodity within university life.

A Relational Pedagogy: Re-engaging Excluded Students with Their Learning
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Despite attempts by successive UK governments to engage some students with their learning in the last 20 years there has been a substantial increase in formal and informal exclusions from secondary schools; particularly of underperforming students, most of whom come from low income families (DCSF, 2009; DfE, 2015; Education datalab, 2015). Nonetheless, current policy states that schools must keep educationally disengaged students on the school registers and also provide much of these students’ education themselves within a broad and balanced curriculum (DfE 2016) - a task often handed over to alternative providers who have traditionally taken a more relational and informal approach. A pedagogic gap emerges, where mainstream schools’ capacity to facilitate the learning of these students within their current pedagogic approaches, more suited to the formal structures of mainstream school classrooms, may result in further resistance or permanent exclusion for these students. However, policy does support mentoring based learning and allows schools the autonomy to develop their own pedagogies. It is here in this policy gap that I propose an alternative, relational pedagogy theoretically informed by Freire’s (1972, 2007) dialogic model, which re-engages educationally disengaged students with their learning by drawing synergies between informal youth work and formal teaching.
Understanding Issues Associated with the Inclusion of Migrant Children in British Schools
Mrs Ana Maria Romaniuc, University of Portsmouth

This paper explores the educational resources and policies adopted by British schools to include migrant children in a new learning environment with particular emphasis on the experiences of children from East European countries. It argues a ‘scholar identity’ forms during classroom interaction. This ‘scholar identity’ is shaped by both past personal experiences and the new educational setting; and, has the potential to provide students with opportunities for shaping their wider identity (Woodward, 1997). The paper discusses the direct connection between children’s ‘being’ which is related to their cultural roots and beliefs and ‘becoming’ linked to the formation of a new status and identity within the classroom interaction (Hall, 2003). The paper suggests that much of the educational discourse that takes place in schools is planned and orientated around performance rather than concentrating on individual pupil’s needs which require teacher and practitioners to learn about a child’s previous experience and socio-economic situation. School policy should take into account the ‘ethnic and cultural diversity’ of every child’s background (Myers and Bhopal, 2017) but the emphasis on performance may work against this. A successful inclusion strategy could be linked to the importance of dialogue construction through hierarchy deconstruction during classroom interaction in order to improve the actual skills using individualised methods. In a given and fixed reality dialogue is used to understand child’s reality and to join in this journey together (Freire, 1987). Such dialogue is at the heart of developing a ‘scholar identity’ that promotes the interests of migrant children.

Parallel Session 8: Higher Education Perspectives

Your Learning Story - A Novel Method for Studying the Psychology of Student Engagement.
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There is surprisingly little research into how and why students may choose to regularly (dis)engage with higher education courses. For ethical and methodological reasons, psychological research into students’ learning experience typically relies on ‘snapshot’ or retrospective reporting methods. Here, we present a novel semi-longitudinal methodology for trying to understand student engagement with a university-style course. We created an optional ‘Human Biology’ unit for first year Psychology (BSc) undergraduates. Over the 11 week ‘unit’, we investigated psychometric, lifestyle and wellbeing factors related to student engagement and attainment. Although we had a small sample size (N=62) our method was holistic, realistic and popular with participants. The current talk highlights the student experience of engaging with the study. Overall, the course was enjoyed but opinion was divided on specific course components, such as mandatory homework and frequency of in-class tests. Many students reportedly benefitted (but many disliked) the high engagement with the ‘unit’. Unexpectedly one of our data-gathering tools, the eDiary, was seen as a positive feature for many of students. It was seen as a providing a missing type of social contact, an “eMum”. This talk concludes with a focus on research methodologies and practical interventions for studying student wellbeing and attainment.
Transitioning to University and ‘Academic Literacies’: Directions of Travel
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‘Academic Literacies’ (Lea & Street, 1998) expectations for university undergraduate assessment success often differ vastly from those familiar to entrants (Wingate, 2015), a situation (arguably) amplified across the past three decades by widening HE participation and educational changes more broadly. Crucial to transitions, then, is how best to backfill any such skills gaps. Historically, UK HE, has favoured ‘socialisation’ and ‘skills’ approaches (Lillis, 2006), resting on assumptions that skills can be acquired relatively implicitly, with recourse, if not, to individually-tailored ‘bolt-on’ support (Wingate, 2006). I will question the fitness-for-purpose of such approaches within H.E. today, and outline some alternatives. Specifically, I will focus firstly on the beneficial effect of formative feedback on performance (Black & William, 2009). Case studies from personal practice will highlight the types of feedback students are most likely to attend to, and the responses these elicit. Secondly, drawing upon personal experience and a pilot project at Sheffield-Hallam University (Nicholls & Procter, 2017), I will consider whether Professional Practice/Employability units (within Childhood and Youth Studies courses) may represent a logical ‘home’ for more course-embedded academic literacies pedagogy. Finally, I will discuss how such matters inform my proposed Doctoral research on the most effective shape of student feedback.

Discovering Stories: Narrative as a Pedagogical Tool in Architecture
Ms Nicola Crowson, University of Portsmouth
Ms Tina Wallbridge, University of Portsmouth

This paper is part of continuing practice and research exploring the use of narrative as a pedagogical tool with the study of architecture. The study of design requires critical thought, reflection, interpretation, practice, refinement and synthesis all in relation to a client need. Today’s ‘millennial’ learner struggles with the pursuit of architecture as it can be a lone endeavour that requires a high level of engagement, reflection and critique. Architectural education needs to ensure the teaching of design is relevant to today’s learner. Building on scholarly texts such as Dewey, Lawson and Schön, this study will explore the complexities and challenges identified within design process and propose a narrative design methodology through which design can be explored. The methodology will propose that the use of narrative gives imagination structure and can allows the author to take ownership of design thinking (Ricoeur 1991). It encourages depth of thought in relation to place and engages both the development of client (Sara 2000) and promotes the act of design critique. The study will chart the use of narrative within studio design projects produced within the School of Architecture in relation to the proposed methodology.
Rethinking Social Issues in Education for the 21st Century

UK Perspectives on International Concerns

Edited by Wendy Sims-Schouten and Sylvia Horton