



# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2022/23





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# INTRODUCTION



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## Director's Welcome

**What does it mean to have impact? Being a lexophile I tend to go back to first principles and start by considering dictionary meanings. One definition of impact is ‘a marked effect or influence’. Impact has for some time been an important feature of academic work where the aim is that our research findings have a marked influence on the lives of the stakeholders of our work.**

Several years ago, funders began to appreciate that ivory tower dwelling academics, labouring over obscure and obtuse issues that few people were interested in, and that few could really benefit from, was not the best way to use funding, much of which comes from public and charitable sources. Impact therefore, became an important element of how research quality was defined for purposes such as the Research Excellence Framework, and key funders required applicants to clearly identify how they would ensure impact from their work. While this may prove to be a big challenge for the dustier academic disciplines, I have always felt that in principle, demonstrating impact

in the field of Education is far more straightforward. In our department, despite the diversity of approaches and topics in our research profile, we are united in our interest to ensure our research has a value, or ‘marked influence’, on the people or institutions we anticipate will benefit most from our efforts. These may range from students in classrooms to governments, and everything in between.

In the pages of this Annual Report we find further examples of exciting research and initiatives that support the development and implementation of impact from our work. There have been several initiatives in the department which help all of us achieve our aims



**WE ARE UNITED IN OUR INTEREST TO ENSURE OUR RESEARCH HAS A VALUE, OR ‘MARKED INFLUENCE’**

*Professor Victoria Murphy*

in respect of impact. The group of colleagues tasked with supporting the development of our impact case studies for REF21 has been formalised such that it is now an important part of our Research Strategy work and an integral part of the department's governance structure. We also have been advised by a REF Impact Facilitator (RIF), who works for the Division of Social Sciences but spends time in our department supporting colleagues in developing impact from their research. Our RIF, together with our dedicated communications team, has been really helpful for many of us in thinking about maximising the impact of our research.

Another relatively new initiative in the department to help us maximise the impact of our research is through the Oxford Education Deanery (OED). Last year we began to revivify the OED by appointing two new co-Directors (Dr Laura Molway and Dr Hamish Chalmers).

They have spent the past few months working closely with colleagues across the department to develop a suite of activities aimed at disseminating their research in the form of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) events for key stakeholders. In this way, the department can liaise more closely with those who should be benefitting most from our work, and those stakeholders can equally reap the benefits of liaising with researchers and their cutting-edge projects. This summer (July 2023) saw the roll out of three exciting short courses that served as a form of trial as we continue to develop a wider CPD offer which will be formally launched in the department next summer.

Of course, there would not be any findings to disseminate without the world-leading research in the first place. In this report several exciting projects are highlighted which are excellent examples of research with

high impact. The Education and Training for the Climate (ETC) Hub led by Dr Steve Puttick is one such example. The ETC Hub is an interdisciplinary project focusing on climate change education. This is a very exciting and high-profile project which we are confident will have a marked influence on how we think about education and training around climate change going forward. The Improving Working Memory + Arithmetic (IWM+A) project, funded by the Education Endowment Foundation and led by Professors Gabriel Stylianides and Terezinha Nuñez, is another example of rigorous research having impact in schools. In this project, a structured intervention aimed at supporting working memory and numeracy in primary schools aims to have a marked influence on pupils who struggle with maths. Over 2,000 children have participated in this randomised controlled trial which is being independently evaluated.

Another exciting project that is also very timely is Professor Rebecca Eynon's ESRC funded project examining the equitable use of educational technology in schools. In this project Rebecca is examining various aspects of tech use in and outside of the classroom. Little is known about this important area despite the fact that tech use in educational contexts continues to grow. The LiFT project is another example of rigorous research that explores how tech (in this case a mobile app aimed at young children) might support key aspects of young children's learning and engagement such as vocabulary learning, creativity development and joint media engagement. While millions of children around the world use mobile applications, very little is known about the impact of that use on their development. The LiFT project is aimed at filling that gap in our knowledge and has a very wide range of stakeholders, and given that one arm of

the project's activities is around analysing the learning analytics from the app users (in the hundreds of thousands), it also has a very wide reach.

As you will see throughout the pages of this Annual Report, the work of our vibrant and dynamic department continues to be mindful of impact and our research in particular is aimed at ensuring that we can meet our department's strategic objectives to conduct transformative, high-quality, multidisciplinary research, with impact. We hope to have a marked effect or influence in all that we do so we can meet our vision to produce world-leading research and offer outstanding pedagogy, achieved through the quality and diversity of our community in order to develop a more just and fair society.

**Professor Victoria Murphy**  
Director of the Department

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**WE HOPE TO HAVE A MARKED EFFECT OR INFLUENCE IN ALL THAT WE DO SO WE CAN MEET OUR VISION TO PRODUCE WORLD-LEADING RESEARCH AND OFFER OUTSTANDING PEDAGOGY**

*Professor Victoria Murphy*



# Year in Review

**1st**



in the 2021 Research Excellence Framework for education research

**1st**



in the UK for degrees in education for eleven years running  
*Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023*

**1st**



in the world for degrees in education  
*Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2023*

**£3m+**



Newly secured research funding

**757**



Students pursuing postgraduate courses in education

**48**



Nationalities (students)

**14**



Scholarships awarded to new students

**9**



Postgraduate programmes at masters and doctoral level

**15**



DPhil completions

**7.3k**



X (Twitter) followers

**2.7k**



LinkedIn followers

**40**



ITE school placement partnerships

# In the News

**Get involved in the Digital Play Research Hub – BBC Radio Oxford**

*Sandra Mathers promotes the Digital Research Hub*

May 16, 2023

**Orwell Prize for Reporting Homelessness 2023 goes to DPhil student Freya Marshall Payne**

June 22, 2023

Freya's original article in the Guardian: Hidden UK homelessness is about to get much worse, with Covid support being cut

**Profile: Dr Michelle Meadows, former Ofqual Deputy Chief Regulator**

November 22, 2022  
Schools Week

**Covid-19 pandemic hasn't affected the studies of UK children – India Education**

*Ariel Lindorff, Jamie Stiff and Heather Kayton*

Jun 2, 2023  
Read all about the PIRLS report on our website.

**The Knowledge. Policy lessons from the Covid exam crisis**

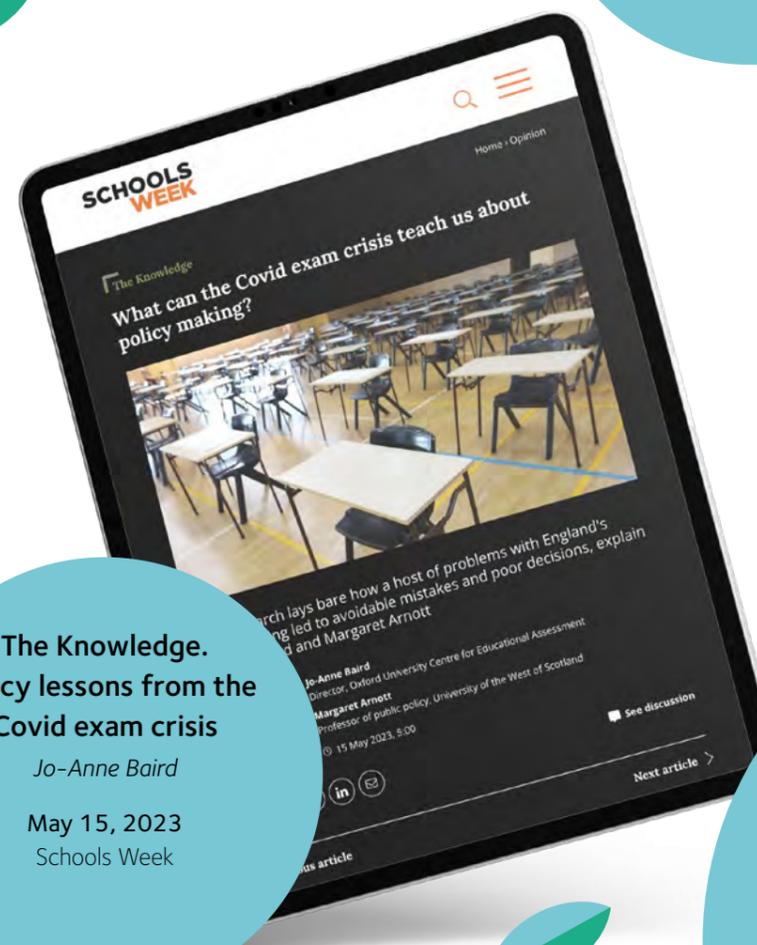
*Jo-Anne Baird*

May 15, 2023  
Schools Week

**Asia's changing internationalisation hotspots – Times Higher Education (THE)**

June 22, 2023

Xin Xu quoted in an article exploring why some Asian territories are growing more global while others are not.



# Highlights

## Colleagues chosen to be part of 50th anniversary edition of BERJ



Two Department academics had their papers chosen as amongst the 10 best articles of their decade by the British Educational Research Journal (BERJ) for a 50th anniversary collection special.

Emeritus Professors Anne Edwards and John Furlong had their papers included in the publication to mark the upcoming 50th anniversary of BERJ in 2025, and also its publisher BERA who celebrate the same milestone in 2024. To mark these anniversaries, five virtual special issues of the journal were published to map the first five decades of BERJ, from 1975 to the present day.

Anne said: "I was honoured and delighted to learn that my 2003 article with Lynn Protheroe 'Learning to See in Classrooms: what are student teachers learning about teaching and learning while learning to teach in schools?' was included in the BERA at 50 selection of papers. Our analyses made gentle use of socio-cultural theory to argue that learning involves recognising, approaching, and tackling new challenges."

John said: "I was delighted to learn that BERJ chose my 2003 article 'BERA at 30: Have we Come of Age?' as one of the top 10 articles of its decade. Given that BERJ is perhaps the leading educational journal in the UK, it was a huge honour."

## Department academics win Teaching Excellence Awards



Two academics at our Department, Dr Ann Childs and Dr Ariel Lindorff, received awards at the Social Sciences Division's annual Teaching Excellence Awards.

Dr Ann Childs, Associate Professor of Science Education, received an Achievement Award for demonstrating high quality and sustained commitment to education. She said: "Thanks must go to my brilliant colleagues and students at the Department of Education and beyond for creating a culture of excellence and support which I have had the privilege to learn from every single day."

Dr Ariel Lindorff, Associate Professor and Research Lecturer, received an Individual Award as an outstanding academic who teaches graduate students. Ariel said: "I am honoured to receive a Teaching Excellence Award. Anything positive I do in my teaching is very much facilitated by having such brilliant students and colleagues!"

## British Academy Fellowship Recipient



Dr Yuliya Zayachuk was the recipient of the British Academy Researcher-at-Risk Fellowship this year.

Yuliya, who is also an academic visitor at the Department, is an Associate Professor at the Department of General Pedagogics and Pedagogics of Higher Education, Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Ukraine. She continues her research which focuses on the internationalisation of higher education in Ukraine, and the challenges and transformations of higher education in times of Russia's ongoing military invasion. The Researchers at Risk Fellowships Programme covers the natural sciences, medical and health sciences, engineering, humanities, social sciences and the arts with applications made via UK-based institutions and supported by the UK National Academies with the Council for At-Risk Academics.

Dr Zayachuk's fellowship was organised by Professor Sibel Erduran, Director for Research and her academic mentor is Dr Maia Chankseliani.

## Singapore's National Institute of Education inaugural Lee Sing Kong Professor



Professor Iram Siraj was named NIE's inaugural Lee Sing Kong Professor — an appointment aimed at boosting early childhood education expertise and collaboration in Singapore and abroad.

Iram said: "I was delighted to be invited to be the Inaugural Lee Sing Kong Visiting Professor; to honour the long standing contribution of Professor Kong to teacher education in Singapore and the NIE. Thus allowing me to share our extant and impactful work on child development research, early education policy and practice, undertaken at Oxford to a wide ranging audience of researchers, policy makers and educationalists from across Singapore and neighbouring countries."

## PGCE student recognition



Each year the Oxford Review of Education awards a prize to the PGCE student with the highest scoring Professional Development Programme assignment.

Kieran Lavis won the award this year with his assignment entitled 'Preparing Students for a Digital World: A Critical Exploration of Digital Inclusion in Secondary Schools in England'.

Dr Velda Elliott, joint editor (with Professor Jo-Anne Baird and Professor Steve Strand) of the Oxford Review of Education, presented the award at the PGCE end-of-year celebration party. Kieran will be continuing his research on issues of digital inclusion next year when he commences the MSc in Learning and Teaching.



## Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences



Professor Alis Oancea was elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences. The Academy of Social Sciences Fellowship comprises distinguished social scientists from academia, private and third sectors.

Professor Oancea said: "I am delighted to join the fellowship of the Academy of Social Sciences. It does, of course, take a village - and that includes so many students and colleagues for whose brilliant scholarship, care and integrity I am truly thankful."

Alis also joined the Social Science Division leadership team as divisional Advocate for Impact (Responsible Engagement and Innovation).



**I AM DELIGHTED TO JOIN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

*Professor Alis Oancea*

## Honorary doctorate success



Professor Kathy Sylva received an honorary doctorate in April from the University of Yvaskyla. She is pictured with her host from the Faculty of Education Professor Marja-Kristiina Lerkkanen.

Kathy wears the doctoral hat and sword presented to her by the Rector. Kathy said: "I am honoured to receive this degree, but especially the sword which is given so that I may 'fight for Truth'. I'm afraid that I shall be engaged in constant battle now that - at long last - I have an appropriate weapon for this fight."

# RESEARCH

# AND IMPACT



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## Introduction



During the 2022-2023 academic year, our research has continued to contribute to knowledge and make impact at various levels of the education sector. Our portfolio of grants from prestigious funders such as the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Nuffield Foundation, Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) illustrate the esteem and significance of the research carried out by our staff.

Timely themes such as education about climate change and digital justice are being researched by teams of leading academics and early career researchers. Our research structures have been enhanced by the inauguration of a Research Impact Committee which is providing a proactive approach to forging impact in policy and practice of education. A new research group on Race, Coloniality and Education has been established. Although we have a tradition of representing and addressing such themes across the department, formation of an institutional structure is likely to help consolidate and solidify our ambitions to surpass historical injustices in education at home and beyond.

The Oxford Education Deanery, a research-engaged professional learning partnership, has broadened its remit to be inclusive of new partnerships and themes such as teaching and learning in diverse language environments. We have developed more detailed and informative policies for mentoring early career researchers as well as guidelines to support grant management by principal investigators. Our flagship public seminar series has continued to attract a diversity of stakeholders and has included well-attended events such as those focusing on the use of research evidence in education policy. Our doctoral researchers have contributed to

research outputs in top publications, such as a Nature affiliate journal, reporting on science communication about Covid-19 in national newspapers during the omicron phases of the pandemic.

research environment. The department has demonstrated its commitment to provide support for generating and sustaining impact of our research beyond academia as well as for ensuring that our research continues to be ethical. To this end, our research infrastructure has been enhanced by new appointments to support research impact and data management.

The various research projects, institutional structures and events in our department are possible thanks to the collective efforts of a community of academics, researchers, students, administrators and librarians among others. It is difficult to imagine what research in our department would look like if it was not for the dedication of the professional staff who manage the institutional procedures from inception to dissemination of research. Last, but not least, our onsite café Pring's and its role cannot be underestimated in sparking many novel research ideas through informal discussions over many cups of tea and coffee.

**Professor Sibel Erduran**  
Director for Research



**TO THIS END,  
OUR RESEARCH  
INFRASTRUCTURE HAS  
BEEN ENHANCED BY  
NEW APPOINTMENTS  
TO SUPPORT RESEARCH  
IMPACT AND DATA  
MANAGEMENT**

*Professor Sibel Erduran*

The annual poster conferences across various teaching programmes illustrate our commitment to infuse research into teaching, and to model research practices in the development of future researchers.

As the academic year came to a close, we embarked on a renewed vision for our research strategy to focus on research culture in a more structured and systematic manner to ensure that we are continuously reflecting and acting on the improvement of our

# Major Projects

## Learning for Families through Technology



The Learning for Families through Technology (LiFT) project is a collaboration between researchers at the department, Ferrero International and Gameloft. It is aimed at developing and evaluating the educational potential of app-based interactive activities for children and families.

Within this project we are conducting rigorous research in four areas: Vocabulary, Creativity, Joint Media Engagement and Learning Analytics, to investigate language learning (in native and non-native speakers), creativity development, and parent-child interaction outcomes arising from use of technology. The overall aim of LiFT is to benefit society through the development of leading research that will provide a better understanding of the nature of learning through digital technology and will serve as an important step in encouraging families' engagement in their children's education.

Millions of children around the world are using digital learning technologies claiming to have developmental significance at critical points in their lives. A recent (2022) Ofcom survey found that 89% of children aged 3-4 years use live streaming apps or sites, with 17% owning their own mobile device. A survey carried out by our team shows that almost a quarter of children aged

3-7 years spend two hours or more every day using touchscreen devices. The pandemic has increased our focus on digital learning and on opportunities for learning at home. Pre-school children can learn from media which have been well-designed based on educational principles. However, most apps children use are not designed according to educational principles. For example, a recent review conducted by the LiFT team found that very few of the commonly available apps designed to promote children's creativity were of high quality; and that app store data available to parents provided very little indication of their quality.

Media can be so much more than a babysitter for young children. The question is how to harness the untapped potential in new technology to support children's learning. We can think of children's use of digital devices in the same way we might their diet. Although children might have the odd treat, we cannot give them junk food – or what they feel like eating – all of the time.



THIS VIDEO SUMMARISES THE WORK

We need to think about 'nutritious' digital use. Our research in the LiFT project will help us understand what that 'nutritious' digital use is, so as to enable parents, children and families to obtain the maximum benefit from engaging in these digital activities.

The research team was led by Victoria Murphy, Rebecca Eynon and Sandra Mathers and comprised of Sophie Booton, Pinar Kolançali, Daniela Singh, Fiona Jelley, Pinal Mehta, Sara Ratner and Cate Hamilton.

## Towards equity focused approaches to EdTech: a socio-technical perspective



Beginning in December 2022, and one of nine projects funded by the ESRC's Education Research Programme, this two and a half year project explores the relationships between equity, technology and teaching and learning in secondary schools.

There is a lot of hope that the use of technology in schools can reduce educational and social inequalities for young people. However, very little is known about how technology is actually used for learning and teaching, the everyday realities for schools and teachers, and if technology does make things fairer for all students or not.

In the current environment, with new patterns of post-pandemic social and digital exclusion, the rise of AI including generative and large-scale language models, and the ways that an array of digital technologies are progressively embedded into all aspects of schooling, questions of equity become ever more important.

This project aims to understand how these changes impact the realities of teaching and learning in secondary schools across England, by gathering rich, ethnographic data about the

ways technology is embedded in school practices, and how this relates to ideas about equity and educational opportunities.

These findings will be used as a basis for participatory workshops with key stakeholders to debate and visualise future equity focused approaches to EdTech; and to develop a set of Open Educational Resources specifically for EdTech developers. The work will lead to new theoretical insights, inform future school policy in England and steer EdTech developers to design better technologies for schools.

The project is led by the Department of Education in collaboration with the Oxford Internet Institute which is also based at the University. Research team members were Rebecca Eynon, Laura Hakimi, Valentina Andries and Louise Couceiro.

### SPECIFICALLY, THE PROJECT EXPLORES:

- How varied digital technologies are used inside and outside the classroom.
- How the use of such EdTech systems influences teacher student relationships.
- The inbuilt biases and underpinning values promoted by such technologies.
- How access to EdTech and its uses varies across contexts and circumstances.



## International Mobility

When people travel internationally, as students or professionals, they develop new skills, acquire new knowledge and are exposed to new ideas, values, and ways of thinking. International Mobility and World Development is an interdisciplinary research project exploring how individuals with student, professional, or youth mobility experience help their home countries develop – how they use the formative experiences and insights they gain abroad to make a difference back home.

The project also studies how student flows between countries can affect national development indicators such as in health, education, justice and freedom, poverty, and gender equality.

The project is unique in many ways. It covers all six regions of the world: Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Eurasia, the Middle East and Northern Africa, South and Central Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. It compares the experiences of people who have been internationally mobile with those who have not, to better understand the impact of this type of experience. And, last but not least, it combines evidence from numeric data on the global

trends with an in-depth exploration of individual experiences in 70 countries.

This involves 700 interviews with people who have contributed to, or fought for, positive turning points in their countries, including leading a non-profit organisation to address the needs of disadvantaged pupils, introducing a major bill aiming to alleviate poverty, leading a social movement campaigning for women's right to vote, and so on. The interviews explore how individuals' experiences abroad shaped their development, their sense of agency, their civic identity and ultimately their ability to impact system-level changes at home. Initial findings from the numeric data

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**THE PROJECT STUDIES HOW STUDENT FLOWS BETWEEN COUNTRIES CAN AFFECT NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS SUCH AS IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, JUSTICE AND FREEDOM, POVERTY, AND GENDER EQUALITY.**

analysis suggest that, compared to Russia and China, travel to the US for study has a positive effect on a home country's level of gender equality, justice, freedom, education and health but not on economic development.

This project was an outcome of a successful joint bid of the District Communications Group (USA) and the University of Oxford to the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Education & Cultural Affairs (ECA). Oxford-based work, with a budget of \$1.7 million over three years, is led by Maia Chankseliani, and includes Ahmad Akkad, Ilka Vari-Lavoisier, Joonghyun Kwak, Natalya Hanley, Zhe Wang and Lorena Sanchez Tyson.

## Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022



In collaboration with Pearson, the Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment (OUCEA) is delivering the OECD's 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland.



The contract, which is to act as the PISA 2022 National Centre, has been awarded by the Department for Education (DfE) and involves working closely with policy makers. PISA is undertaken by more than 80 countries and economies every three years, making it a truly international endeavour to evaluate and improve education systems worldwide. The on-screen tests are designed to assess the knowledge and skills of a representative sample of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics and science. Test items are translated into many different languages, with the goal of making international comparisons that are as valid and sophisticated as possible.

In addition to the assessment, students respond to a questionnaire providing information about their home

background, language use, parents, motivation and interests in the different subjects. This information provides further context to the results, something which is particularly important in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. Indeed, PISA results inform national and international policy discussions by identifying areas where improvements may be made and instigating further research.

Pearson has already successfully undertaken testing and questionnaire administration in hundreds of schools across England, Wales and Northern Ireland and the OUCEA will now be responsible for data analysis and dissemination of the results through national reports, international conferences, and academic journals.

The first outputs from this research are expected towards the end of 2023. The team is led by Jenni Ingram and includes Jamie Stiff, Stuart Cadwallader, Heather Kayton and Gabriel Lee. The Pearson team, which has been closely involved, is led by Grace Grima.



**READ MORE ABOUT PISA ON THE DEPARTMENT WEBSITE**

# New Project Awards

## **A scoping review into the teaching and learning of Arabic as a second language**

Qatar Foundation International,  
Dr Robert Woore

## **Assessing self-efficacy and practice in supporting communication in early childhood education and care settings**

John Fell Fund,  
Dr Katharina Ereky Stevens

## **Assessing the feasibility of a supplementary health assessment measure for young people in residential and foster care**

What Works for Children's Social Care,  
Dr Aine Kelly

## **Assessment matters**

Teaching Development and Enhancement Project, Professor Jo-Anne Baird and Dr Michelle Meadows

## **Belonging to the difficult past: The potential of history education to foster positive belonging among racially minoritized youth**

British Academy: Post Doctoral Fellowship, Dr Natasha Robinson

## **Brainwaves: Adolescent mental health study**

Brainwaves: Adolescent mental health study, Dr Ian Thompson

## **Child in Time – Existential Resilience in Early Childhood**

The Academy of Finland, Dr Liam Gearon

## **Developing eBooks for Applaydu and beyond LiFT**

Kinder, Professor Victoria Murphy

## **Developing language-responsive mathematics classrooms**

Nuffield: Grants for Research, Development & Analysis, Dr Jenni Ingram

## **Development and user uptake of self-learning packs for teachers**

GCRF and Newton Consolidation Account, Professor Sonali Nag

## **Enabling secondary students' equitable access to future-oriented thinking skills in science**

ESRC: Impact Acceleration Account, Professor Sibel Erduran

## **Evaluating inter-instrument reliability in the assessment of methodological trustworthiness in reports of experiments and quasi-experiments in education research**

John Fell Fund: Pump Priming, Dr Hamish Chalmers

## **Exploring care leavers' transitions to independence: A qualitative study to be published on Socialcaretalk.org for prospective care leavers, educators, service providers and policy makers**

National Institute for Health Research, Dr Aine Kelly

## **Future education and training for the climate**

Social Sciences Division Interdisciplinary Hubs, Dr Steven Puttick

## **Gendered inequalities in education and capability spaces for women/girls (and others) in Pakistan during Covid**

British Association for International and Comparative Education, Dr Aliyah Khalid

## **GEM project learning: enhancing learning experiences of geography and mathematics interns**

Teaching Development and Enhancement Project, Dr Karen Skilling

## **Improving oral language skills in children with English as an additional language through a drama-based intervention**

John Fell Fund: Pump Priming, Dr Faidra Faitaki

## **Leading mentoring in teacher education**

Internal award, Dr Emma Rawlings Smith

## **Mapping agricultural skills needs**

Social Science Division, Dr James Robson

## **Needs-based funding in centralised higher education admissions: Policy challenges in Georgia**

Open Fellowship: Oxford Policy Engagement Network,  
Dr Maia Chankseliani

## **Policy and Research Network – Children's Social Care**

Open Fellowship: Oxford Policy Engagement Network,  
Professor Leon Feinstein

## **Self-Efficacy in Mathematics, Pathways in Education and Research**

Norwegian Research Council,  
Professor Gabriel Stylianides

## **Social inequalities within UK skills policy and tertiary education structures**

Nuffield: Grants for Research, Development & Analysis,  
Dr James Robson

## **Standard setting in GCSEs in Wales**

Qualifications Wales, Professor Jo-Anne Baird and Dr Michelle Meadows

## **The uses of technology in teaching and learning: a relational approach to equity**

ESRC: Towards equity focused approaches to EdTech,  
Professor Rebecca Eynon

## **To produce a framework of measurement of child development fit for post-Covid early learning environment**

Kindred Squared,  
Professor Leon Feinstein

## **UK secondary school students' motivations for learning Chinese as a Foreign Language**

Swire Chinese Language Foundation,  
Dr Robert Woore and Dr Laura Molway

## **What research gets funded? Examining funding practices in doctoral education**

John Fell Fund Early Career Researchers,  
Dr Kelsey Innouye



KEEP UP TO DATE WITH DEPARTMENT NEWS  
AND PROJECT AWARDS



# IMPACT AND

# ENGAGEMENT

## Research at Rees

Two research programmes in the Rees Centre have impacted upon both national policy and local practice for vulnerable pupils in local authorities and primary, secondary and special schools.

The first is the Alex Timpson Attachment and Trauma Awareness in Schools Programme. This involved 305 schools from 26 local authorities and focused on the impact in schools of training on attachment and trauma awareness. Each local authority devised their own training programme for a group of schools, using a commercial supplier or the Virtual School and/or Educational Psychology Service. However, the training needed to last at least one day in total and be delivered on a whole-school basis (i.e. with all staff involved, including non-teaching staff). Online surveys with staff and pupils were used across all schools, with in-depth interviews and focus groups in 34 case study schools. The main findings were that where the schools and local authorities were supportive, evidence-led changes were made over 1-3 years including to behaviour policies, use of 'emotion coaching' and 'timeout' spaces, and greater focus on empathy, trust and relationship building, as well as enhanced cross-agency working. A survey of 112 headteachers reported improvements in attendance (72%), engagement (97%), learning (92%) and attainment (79%); 81% reported a drop in the need for sanctions including exclusion.

The reports on the Timpson Programme can be found on our [Department website](#).

The second research programme is ongoing and involves an evaluation of the extended duties of Virtual School Heads to children with a social worker (CWSW) whose educational outcomes are much poorer than those of other children. The additional resources and responsibilities introduced in September 2021 to support CWSW's education were well received and used strategically through for example, better use of data, training, and improvements to how children's personal education plans are drawn up. The report identifies barriers including the short duration of the funding, lack

**THE REPORTS ON THE TIMPSON PROGRAMME CAN BE FOUND ON OUR DEPARTMENT WEBSITE**

**THE REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADS EVALUATION CAN BE FOUND ON THE GOV.UK WEBSITE**

of access to accurate data, social worker turnover and delays in special educational needs and disabilities being addressed. The Department for Education responded by continuing the funding for a further two years, strengthening data requirements to improve access and revising the guidance relating to CWSW. The report of the evaluation can be found on the GOV.UK website. The team working on these projects comprised of Leon Feinstein, Judy Sebba, Nikki Luke, Neil Harrison (now at Exeter University), Helen Trivedi, Georgia Hyde-Dryden, Andrew Brown, Alun Rees (independent consultant), Priya Tah, Mariela Neagu and Tracey Denton-Calabrese.

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# Improving Working Memory Plus Arithmetic (IWM+A)

**Working memory - the ability to keep information in mind and use it to guide behaviour - is a fundamental element of learning and underpins many activities that children do at school, including understanding numbers and arithmetic.**

Children who have working memory difficulties often struggle with arithmetic and show lower mathematics attainment. Improving Working Memory Plus Arithmetic is a structured 10-week intervention designed to improve the mathematics attainment of 6-8-year old children who are struggling with mathematics, by improving their working

memory and their understanding of numbers. IWM+A is delivered in schools by a specially trained teaching assistant in one-hour weekly sessions to pupils who, according to their teacher, have been identified as low-attaining in arithmetic. The teaching assistant delivering the intervention works on a one-to-one

**IMPROVING WORKING MEMORY PLUS ARITHMETIC IS A STRUCTURED 10-WEEK INTERVENTION DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE MATHEMATICS ATTAINMENT OF 6-8-YEAR OLD CHILDREN WHO ARE STRUGGLING WITH MATHEMATICS**



The project was funded by the Education Endowment Foundation and the Department for Education. The project was led by Gabriel Stylianides, working with Terezinha Nunes, Louise Matthews and Rosanna Lea.



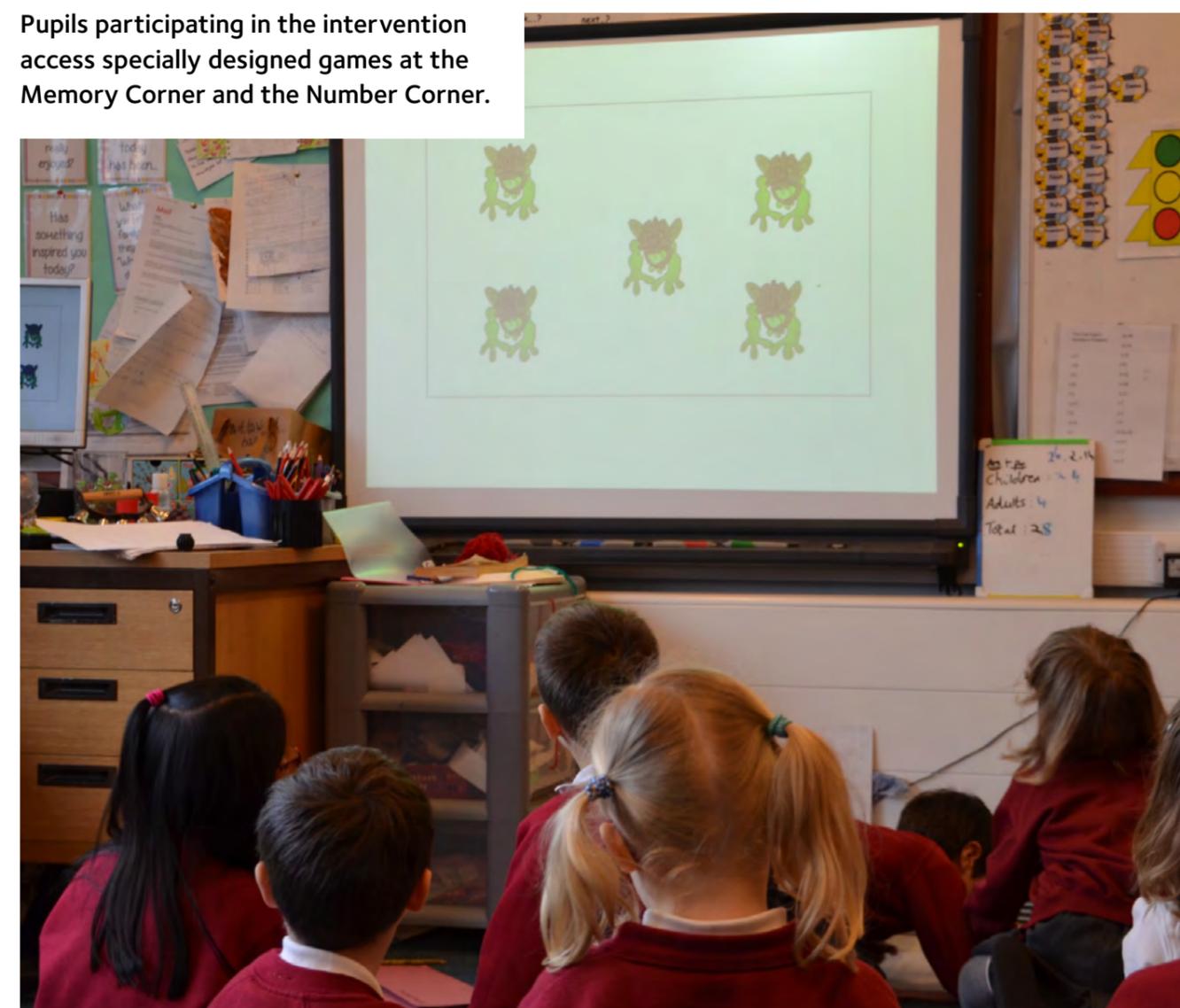
basis with a pupil and employs certain teaching strategies while, at the same time, a second pupil plays dedicated computer games in the same room. Midway through the session the children swap roles.

The data collection for the effectiveness trial has taken place in 201 primary schools across England (approximately 2,010 pupils), mostly overlapping with the Covid-19 pandemic which is an indication of the schools' commitment to the project. Using a randomised controlled trial design, the project aims to evaluate the effect of the intervention on children's working memory and number skills. The trial uses a 'train-the-trainer model', where

the Oxford team trained 12 teacher leaders to deliver IWM+A who then went on to train teaching assistants in their region. RAND Europe are the independent evaluators commissioned by the funder and are testing whether the intervention improved outcomes for children who received it, compared to those in the control group. RAND's report will be published in autumn 2023. The Oxford team is also exploring issues of implementation fidelity and how the delivery of the intervention varies between schools. For this, the team designed a bespoke fidelity instrument that was used when observing the teaching assistants delivering the intervention.

**THE TRIAL USES A 'TRAIN-THE-TRAINER MODEL', WHERE THE OXFORD TEAM TRAINED 12 TEACHER LEADERS TO DELIVER IWM+A WHO THEN WENT ON TO TRAIN TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN THEIR REGION**

**Pupils participating in the intervention access specially designed games at the Memory Corner and the Number Corner.**



# Education and Training for the Climate Hub



The Social Sciences Division has funded three new interdisciplinary hubs, one of which has been awarded to colleagues in Education.

The ETC Hub (Education and Training for the Climate) is located in SKOPE (the Centre for Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance), and is led by Steve Puttick with colleagues from Education (James Robson, Amelia Farber, Sibel Erduran and Liam Guilfoyle) and the Environmental Change Institute (Bill Finnegan and Tina Fawcett). The ETC Hub builds on collaborative interdisciplinary work around climate change education led by Steve including the Nuffield-funded Trust and Climate Change: information for teaching in a digital age, and the GCRF-funded Climate Change Education Futures in India.

The ETC hub is bringing together a wealth of Oxford's world-leading expertise on climate change from

across the University including multiple disciplines and departments in the Social Sciences Division, the Humanities Division, Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division, and Gardens, Libraries and Museums. The hub is ideally-placed to make a significant contribution to the University's response to the climate crisis by engaging with existing successful networks focused on climate change and leveraging this expertise to inform education and training. The attention to education and training for the climate serves an urgent need amongst students at Oxford and beyond who are increasingly calling for greater attention to be given to the climate crisis.

### THE HUB IS:

- Mapping current ETC activities and research at Oxford to create a vibrant web presence and online network. The ETC hub website is now live: <https://etc.education.ox.ac.uk/>

- Creating the space for this network to share work and interests through a series of workshops and webinars.

- Building an interdisciplinary research agenda and securing further funding to expand ETC research and practice at Oxford and beyond.



# TalkTogether: Teacher Professional Development at Scale

The TalkTogether project aims to support children's oral language development as a foundation for school entry, with a focus on multilingual contexts in low and middle income countries (LMICs). A recent focus of the project has been the development of appropriate, context-informed materials for continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers, curriculum developers and assessment app developers.

A sixteen-part series on multilingual classrooms is now available in India. The series is available through government online platforms and annual programme plans for CPD.

Innovations include inclusion of the films through QR codes in teacher diaries. User packs and workshops are becoming available to extend the use of the films. The anticipated reach over 2023-2024 is to approximately 70,000 teachers of foundation learning in public schools.

Another four-part series on principles of assessing speaking and listening skills aims to sensitise audiences, in particular those from LMICs, on key considerations when developing child language

assessments. The topics covered are: what is important when assessing oral language; where can we get material for developing such assessments; what to check statistically about a test; and what do we expect from good tests. Films were shared with teacher educators and educational assessment app developed to understand how the series could support their work. Feedback indicated the films shed light on areas of oral language development, such as discourse, which are not often included in teacher training or existing assessments.

The project is led by Sonali Nag with Gideon Arulmani, Margaret Snowling, Alis Oancea and Joshua

McGrath. The team located in Oxford comprised Athina Ntalli, Ernesto Roque-Gutierrez, Hannah Simmons, Siyu Ma, Enxhi Sharxi and Heather Browning-Lee, working with OxCo. South Asia partners were Room to Read (India), Bhasha Network, Honeybee Media and the State Councils for Education Research and Training (SCERT) for the states of Chhattisgarh and Telangana. The funding partners were KRI-GCRF, the GCRF and Newton Consolidation Account (GNCA), UNICEF (India) and USAID.



THE FILMS ARE A GOOD STARTING POINT FOR THINKING ABOUT HOW TO GET STARTED WITH LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT DEVELOPMENT

Nina Bolter, Head of Learning, EIDU





# TEACHING

# AND LEARNING

## Introduction



We once again recruited well to our academic programmes and welcomed a large cohort of new students at the beginning of Michaelmas Term 2022. Our MSc Medical Education course, which started in 2021, now has a full complement of students across both years of the programme and has quickly become established as an exciting and innovative programme that is built on close collaboration between our Department and the Oxford Medical School. Our other programmes have also continued to thrive and we have seen both our part-time and full-time students contributing fully to the life of the Department.

The past year has seen our PGCE programme successfully gain re-accreditation from the Department for Education as part of the significant reforms at national level brought about by the implementation of the government's Market Review of Initial Teacher Training. The re-accreditation process has not been straightforward, not least because of the high level of prescription, both in terms of programme content and structure, within the new national requirements for all teacher education programmes.

In putting forward proposals for our new programme which we will offer from

September 2024 onwards, we have adhered closely throughout to the tried and tested principles of the Oxford Internship Scheme. The next year will, however, be a challenging one for our PGCE as we prepare for the full implementation of the new programme the following year. We are confident, nevertheless, that our excellent partnership with schools will enable us to build on our existing strengths and to work collaboratively and productively on the detail of the new programme throughout 2023-24.

School partnership is also at the heart of our Oxford Education Deanery.

Exciting things are happening as the Deanery seeks to extend its work in providing research-informed development opportunities for teachers through a range of short courses. The first of these were launched at the end of Trinity Term 2023 and have proved to be very popular with teachers both locally and nationally.

**Associate Professor  
Trevor Mutton**  
Director for Graduate Studies



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# Student Experience

by Rebecca Dowbiggin,  
MSc Educational Assessment  
2021–2023



FIND OUT MORE  
ABOUT THE MSc  
IN EDUCATIONAL  
ASSESSMENT

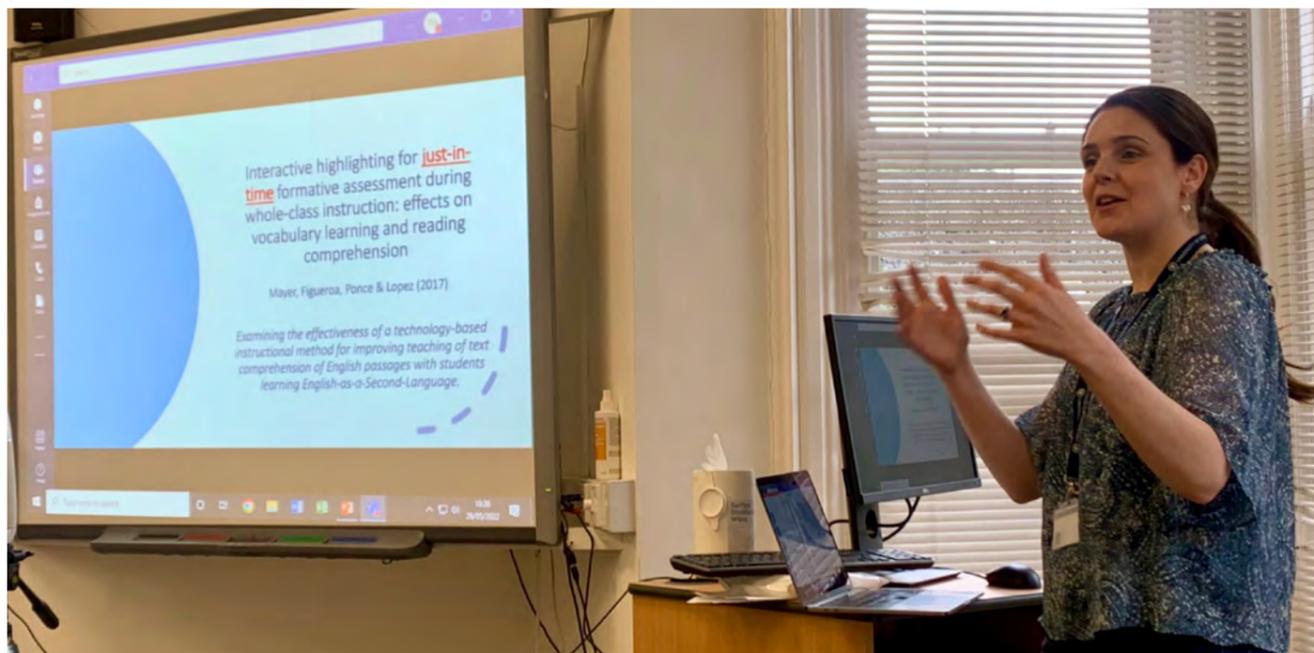
**I have had a wonderful experience as a student on this two-year, part time MSc programme.**

Although coming into the course I had a broad range of interests, my aim was to focus my professional development in the field of educational assessment, with a view to this supporting my work in both teaching and education consultancy. Already, this course has helped me immensely in my professional life; what I have learned about assessment design and evaluation I have applied directly, and I certainly feel more qualified to analyse the quality of assessments and support students approaching high-stakes tests and those sitting admissions tests for higher education.

The course has been so beautifully varied, from gaining a deeper understanding of the different paradigms that underpin approaches to assessment including psychometrics, to exploring classroom-based assessment, there is no part of the course that has not, in some way, informed my own practice. Being able to explore an area of education that I am so passionate about for my dissertation has been extremely rewarding, and I have greatly appreciated the support of the department and my dissertation supervisor Michelle Meadows.

The in-person teaching weeks at Oxford were certainly the highlight of the course for me. I appreciated the way in which core supervisors facilitated such open and engaging discussions and the contributions from guest speakers. Our cohort was brilliantly diverse; it was a pleasure to debate and collaborate with people from such a variety of professional backgrounds, and from around the world.

I have made some life-long friends and look forward to hopefully seeing everyone again at graduation next year – we shall see if our punting skills have improved since we last tried and failed to navigate the River Cherwell!



# New Doctorates

## Ikuya Aizawa

*Content learning in Japanese and English medium instruction: comparing chemistry learning outcomes in Japanese higher education*  
Supervisors: Heath Rose and Jim McKinley

## Abigail Branford

*Decoding 'balance': learning about the British Empire in English secondary schools*  
Supervisors: Jason Todd and David Mills

## Tommaso De Zan

*Mitigating the cyber security skills shortage: the influence of national skills competitions on cyber security interest*  
Supervisors: Ewart Keep and Andrew Martin

## Zhanxin Hao

*Test preparation: an integrated thesis of a meta-analysis and studies on students' strategies*  
Supervisors: Jo-Anne Baird and Yasmine El Masri

## Aine Kelly

*Factors associated with the ability of the care system to meet the physical and mental health needs of young people looked after in England: a mixed-methods study*  
Supervisors: Nikki Luke and Harriet Ward

## Jane Jiyoun Lee

*Risk and protective factors associated with problem behaviour outcomes of children with histories of long-term out-of-home care*  
Supervisors: Lisa Holmes and Leon Feinstein

## Pei-Hsin Li

*Teachers' emotional experiences in classrooms: a micro-longitudinal study in Taiwanese primary schools*  
Supervisors: Lars-Erik Malmberg and Diane Mayer

## Peter Mitchell

*Ethnic school segregation in England: measurement, change and prediction*  
Supervisors: Stephen Strand and Lars-Erik Malmberg

## Aizuddin Mohamed anuar

*STEM education and young people's aspirations for development in "luar bandar": a Malaysian case study*  
Supervisors: Maia Chankseliani and Sibel Erduran

## Aneyn O'Grady

*Capturing the interconnected and interpersonal nature of emotion concepts: implications for social-emotional learning*  
Supervisors: Sonali Nag and Geoffrey Bird

## Inga Storen

*A durable solution? Higher education for refugees in Rwanda*  
Supervisor: David Johnson

## Isobel Talks

*Closing the gender data gap with young women and smartphones in Bangladesh? An anticolonial feminist investigation*  
Supervisors: Niall Winters and Anne Geniets

## Samuel Tsang

*Chinese language provision for ethnolinguistic minorities in Hong Kong primary and secondary schools: policy, practice, and phenomenology*  
Supervisors: Victoria Murphy and Heath Rose

## Shawna-kaye Tucker

*Writing in Creole contexts: a study of Jamaican primary school students and teachers*  
Supervisors: Victoria Murphy and Hamish Chalmers

## Marion Waite

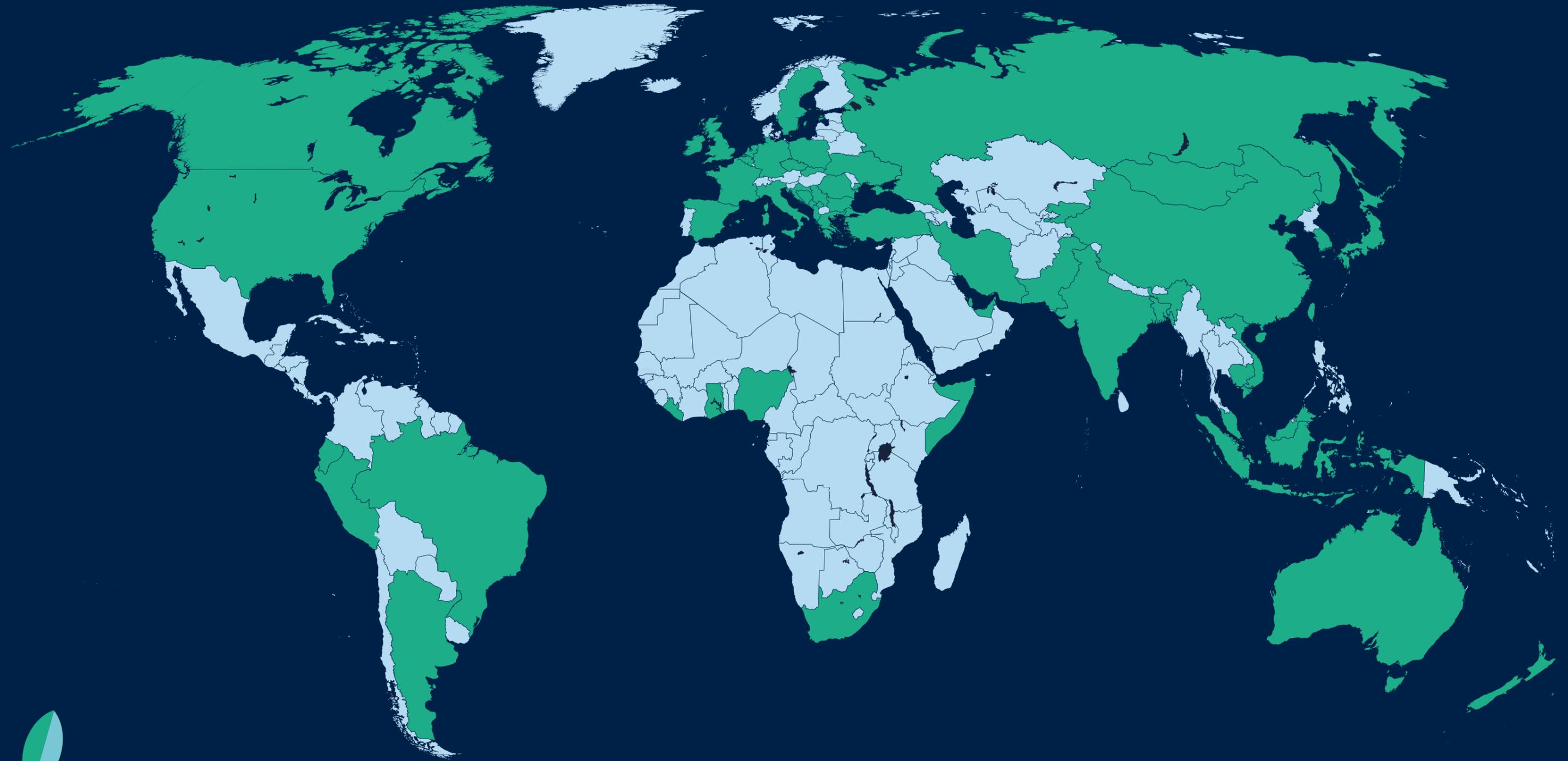
*Imagined futures and relational agency in nurses' writing transitions: a qualitative study across two writing group interventions in a higher education setting*  
Supervisors: Ian Thompson and Nigel Fancourt

## Nicole Dingwall

*Cultured or Encultured?: A study of the cultural identities of English Teachers and the English Department in secondary schools*  
Supervisors: Velda Elliott and Ian Thompson

# Students' Countries of Origin

 STUDENTS' COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN





## Alumni Spotlight Sara Berkai

**I studied the MSc in Child Development in 2020 and came to the department out of an interest in learning more about how children learn. I had studied a mix of Business and Computer Science and I think there were only two of us in the class who had not studied Psychology previously. I had experience at various technology companies and wrote my undergraduate thesis on the digital divide, optimistically interested in internet connectivity as a leveller in knowledge dissemination.**

I come from Eritrea in East Africa which is one of the least internet connected countries. I visit my grandmother regularly and run workshops as a volunteer. Whilst running science and engineering workshops in 2019, kids would say 'I'm an engineer now!' and I wanted to learn more about self-efficacy and agency. Children also asked me to come back with more useful kits such as a torch (in the absence of electricity, a torch would be more useful to build).

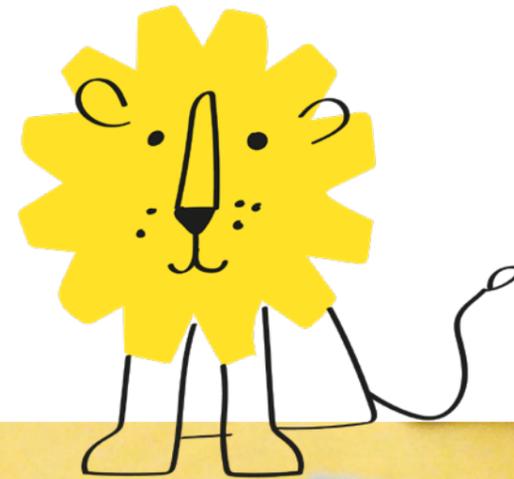
Many of the toys or educational resources are usually outdated and donated through charities or dumped and not designed with context in mind. I had no intention of running a startup but wanted to answer this request of designing a DIY torch. During my studies, I worked three jobs to pay rent and tuition fees and one of the jobs involved tutoring coding and some professors were interested in actually purchasing the DIY kits I was working on, for their own children in Oxford. I wanted to test the one-for-one model, where for each kit purchased, an out-of-school refugee child would receive one for free.

The MSc was incredibly fascinating and I enjoyed the 'Learning & Technology' module where we learnt about prioritarianism and the 'Foundations of Educational Research' module where we explored participatory research methods. These were all informative to testing whether the one-for-one model would work, but where the DIY kits would only be designed with the marginalised children. I formally set up the social enterprise 'Ambessa Play' and we just launched our Kickstarter earlier this year, with 650+ backers globally.

We have bootstrapped with grant funding but we are now considering angel investment. Thanks to the University of Oxford, I have also been able to grow a team as the University funds interns to join us each summer. One of our initial interns is a PhD electrical engineer, Leo, who is still with us today! I recently visited the University last month as part of a panel discussion on social entrepreneurship, with a packed room of students. There seems to be growing support for students considering entrepreneurship post-graduation.

”

**IT WAS SUCH A PRIVILEGE TO BE PART OF A CLASS OF CURIOUS, INTELLIGENT AND COMPASSIONATE STUDENTS WHO REMAIN PASSIONATE ABOUT EDUCATION EQUALITY.**



I will undoubtedly pursue a PhD in the future but I wanted to work on delivering this specific request of designing a DIY flashlight - what's been amazing is that it's taken on a world of its own. We have tested and volunteered with charities in Calais, Dunkirk, Hungary, Eritrea and Ethiopia and to validate the one-for-one model was encouraging as I don't think we can scale and reach millions of displaced children as a charity.

The MSc course itself was, and continues to be, incredibly helpful. I am still in touch with course friends who have gone onto various roles in academia, research and consultancy across the world. We have a WhatsApp group where we share any interesting reports or roles that come up. It was such a privilege to be part of a class of curious, intelligent and compassionate students who remain passionate about education equality.



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT  
THE DIY TORCHES:  
AMBESSA PLAY DIY  
FLASHLIGHT**

# Spotlight on Deanery

This year has been an exciting time for the Oxford Education Deanery, which has a long-term vision to empower educators worldwide to understand, use and co-produce high quality research evidence in Education.



**...THE EXTERNAL SPEAKERS WERE BRILLIANT, REALLY INTERESTING TO HEAR FROM**

*Event attendee*

In the first instance, the new Deanery team has focussed on delivering a variety of pilot teacher learning events, catering to educators across the Primary and Secondary school sectors.

The first of the Education Deanery short courses launched at the end of Trinity Term 2023, with academics from several research teams in the department playing an active role. Events held included a Sustainability Education Colloquium, an Oxford History

Teacher Network conference, a course on understanding evidence, policy and practice when working with students who have English as an additional language; and a course on building an evidence-based Early Years classroom.

As we move into the new academic year, the Deanery plans to extend the variety and scope of teacher learning events, and the range of academics within the department who are actively involved in this work. Over time, we hope

to develop sustained relationships with our community of practice, for example by offering fellowships, creating special interest groups, and facilitating the involvement of schools and educators in the co-creation and co-production of research with departmental researchers.

**Hamish Chalmers and Laura Molway**  
Oxford Education  
Deanery Directors



**A REALLY GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO TALK THROUGH A COMPLEX BUT CRUCIAL ISSUE**

*Event attendee*



## THE DEANERY'S AIMS ARE:

- To provide a mechanism to support professional learning among educators worldwide.
- To provide a coherent and accessible pathway to impact for researchers in the department.
- To establish a network of research engaged professionals from both researcher and teacher communities to facilitate co-creation of research that responds to the substantive interests of practitioners and informs the direction of new research.

# New Appointments

## Academic

**Stuart Cadwallader**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
Educational Assessment

**Jim Carroll**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
History Education

**Emma-Jane Rawlings Smith**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
Geography Education

**Lulu P Shi**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
Digital Education

**Danica Sims**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
Medical Education

**Gary Snapper**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
English Education

**Lucy Wicks**  
Tutor in Modern Languages  
Education

**Jenny Wynn**  
Departmental Lecturer in  
Science Education

## Professional

**Natalia Bonilla Zipitria**  
Finance Assistant

**Mary Bowen-Perkins**  
Communications & Digital  
Engagement Officer

**Madeleine Buil**  
Project Administrator

**Amelia Farber**  
Student Liaison Coordinator

**Hannah Freeman**  
Communications Officer

**Sherene Harding**  
HR Assistant

**Nevila Muka**  
Course Administrator

**Shehzad Naqvi**  
Health & Safety Officer

**Heather Sherkunov**  
Communications Manager

**Elwira Trofimczuk**  
Finance Officer

## Research

**Yousef Aleghfeli**  
Research Officer

**Abigail Branford**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

**Wing-Sze Chan**  
Research Officer

**Nuo Chen**  
Research Assistant

**Aditi Chidambaram**  
Research Assistant

**Holly Cooper**  
Research Assistant

**Candace Debnam**  
Research Assistant

**Bill Finnegan**  
Research Officer

**Mira Al Hussein**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

**Joonghyun Kwak**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

**Chun-Yeung Lee**  
Research Officer

**Siyu Ma**  
Research Assistant

**Pinal Mehta**  
Research Assistant

**Mariela Neagu**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

**Anna-Maria Ramezanzadeh**  
Research Officer

**Paulina Rodriguez Anaiz**  
Post-doctoral Researcher

**Ernesto Roque Gutierrez**  
Research Officer

**Lorena Sanchez Tyson**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

**Luke Saville**  
Research Assistant

**Enxhi Sharxhi**  
Research Assistant

**Indrani Sigamany**  
Research Associate

**Hannah Simmons**  
Research Officer

**Mirna Valladares Celis**  
Postdoctoral Researcher

**Xiujuan Wang**  
Research Assistant

## New Honorary Research Fellows

Honorary Fellows provide a significant level of contribution to the department in the form of mentorship, teaching, supervision, collaborative research and/or professional practice, grant applications, ambassadorship, examination, assessment and development of the academic programmes. This year, the following new fellowships were granted:

**Professor Jill Adler**  
University of Witwatersrand

**Professor Kirstin Erath**  
Martin Luther University

**Dr Hazel Hagger**  
Independent Researcher

**Grace Healy**  
David Ross Education Trust

**Professor Susan James Relly**  
University of Adelaide

**Dr Gavin Killip**  
Nottingham Trent University

## New Honorary Norham Fellows

**Dr Olga Ioannidou**  
Independent Researcher

**Dr Pramod Sah**  
The Open University

**Dr Kim Polgreen**  
Oxford Earth Academy

**Professor Gavin Moodie**  
University of Ontario

**Professor Neil Selwyn**  
Monash University

**Professor Andreas Stylianides**  
University of Cambridge

**Dr Alina von Davier**  
Duolingo

**Professor Leesa Wheelahan**  
University of Ontario

**Dr Chris Wheadon**  
No More Marking Ltd

**Mark Searle**  
Independent Researcher

**Hau Ming Tse**  
Independent Researcher

**Professor Niall Winters**  
Independent Researcher

## Visiting Professor

Visiting Professors are outstanding in their field of work and are nominated by the Department. Our current Visiting Professor is:  
**Professor Ebru Kaya**



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT  
THE PEOPLE AT THE  
DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

## Academic Visitors

**Dr Hoonhui Cho**  
Republic of Korea Ministry  
of Education

**Dr Yuliya Zayachuk**  
Ivan Franko National  
University of Lviv

**Dr Marc Sarazin**  
The University of Edinburgh



# Engage with us

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### Write to us

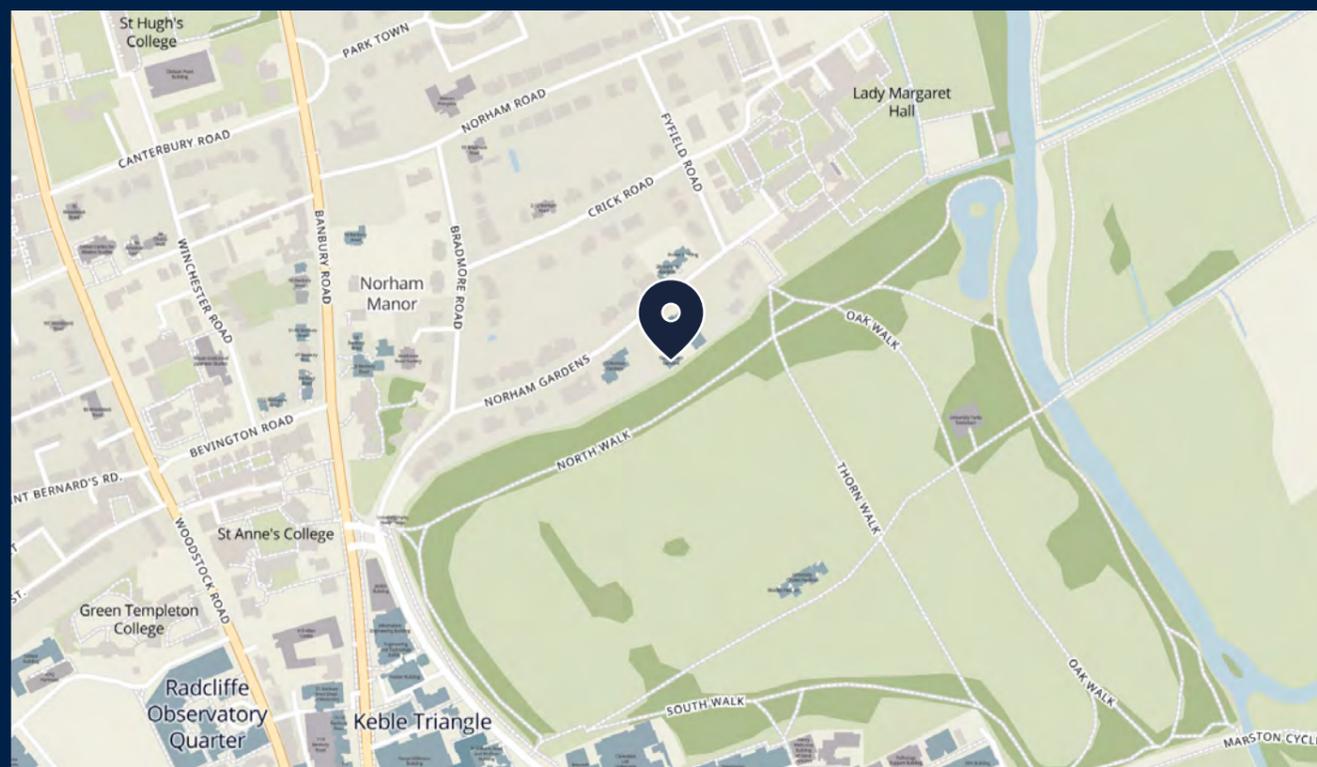
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OUR DEPARTMENT

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