



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS AND CONFERENCE PROGRAMME
Conference Theme:
**Improving Educational Practice Through Educational
Research**

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOUNDATION
ANNUAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE
Monday 1 JULY 2019**

**MARY WARD HOUSE
BLOOMSBURY
LONDON
WC1H 9SN**

ETF Annual Research Conference 2019		
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Foreword: David Russell

Welcome to the Education and Training Foundation's Annual Practitioner Research Conference 2019, *Improving Educational Practice Through Educational Research*. As our first cohorts of MPhil researchers complete their studies and in many cases progress even further into PhD research, it seems a good time to reflect on the successes to date of this ground-breaking programme, as well as looking forward to even greater things.

In the education world we are often at risk of being overtaken by events – political, economic and social factors all move around us in ways that can affect teaching and learning profoundly. The Practitioner Research Programme exists to give teachers the criticality and depth of research knowledge they need to be part of a wider movement of self-improvement in teaching practice across our sector. The same knowledge and skills help us to get ahead of unseen and unfolding events and be ready for challenges we do not yet know we face.



For a number of years this criticality was in itself enough of an achievement. In a time of greater demands on teaching staff and a slow but consistent erosion of time to reflect on and improve practice, creating a programme seeking to restore these to the heart of teaching was important in the work of the ETF. To take this programme and then to inject the requirements of accredited study could have proven an ambition too far. Instead, it has provided a framework to enhance yet further the credibility of this approach and give our teacher-researchers levels of confidence and opportunities for development of which we should all be proud.

Research originating on this programme is being used today by teachers across our sector. It is informing the work of ETF expert colleagues. It is being presented nationally and internationally to academic audiences, and I look forward to the first ever, ETF-University of Sunderland, International Research Conference, *Practice Focused Research in Education*, as part of the Practitioner Research Programme in the summer of 2020. The recent move by Ofsted to call for research evidence from our sector and the ensuing submissions from a number of our researchers, together with the involvement of the SUNCETT team with whom we work so closely, are all part of my growing confidence that research from this programme will remain a feature of the landscape of our sector for many years to come.

Ultimately, this research is the result of the hard work and dedication of individuals and their colleagues, mentors and leaders. The time spent on your own research, only you can ever know. As we see the fruits of this labour today, I would hope that every member of this 'Class of 2019' feels as excited and proud of their work as we at the Foundation do when we see what it is that you as individuals and as a collective are able to produce. I hope it will inspire you and those who work around you to continue to

make your voices heard and expertise known, through the Society for Education and Training, with your colleagues at your own institutions, and across the sector.

David Russell
CEO ETF

Conference Welcome: Paul Kessell Holland

On behalf of The Education and Training Foundation (ETF), I am delighted to welcome all delegates and visitors to The ETF Annual Research Conference 2019.

There are times when introducing a conference can be difficult. This is one such time. Not for any negative reasons – the programme of Practitioner Research is in robust health, in fact this year we see a number of our MPhil Year 2 cohort from last year's conference moving forward to complete their PhD studies. The research being produced by this programme is being presented at a wide variety of conferences – notably following last year's London conference a number of PRP participants took their work to the ARPCE conference at Oxford University. They were a hugely powerful and credible group of researchers alongside academics from across the world, and this is not the only example of the impact of this programme on a national or international stage in the past year.



So, why is this year difficult? It is the very fact that once again there is an exceptional group of researchers presenting another 'crop' of incredibly high-quality papers, posters and sessions. Once again, a huge amount of time, effort and dedication has gone into building new arguments, understanding prior research, and adding to the body of knowledge within FE. I am, once again, awe struck by the time and care that so many individuals have spent in the research work they have undertaken. I am out of superlatives.

I am also mindful, though, that each individual who is here today, presenting their work perhaps for the very first time, is as deserving of our respect and time as those who began this journey several years ago, some of whom are returning here as 'old hands', or who have gone on to continue their learning and exploration in other ways. The sheer diversity - as well as the incredible quality - of the work on display is a reminder of the individual stories behind this research. We must never become complacent, never assume that work of this level will just 'happen'. Only with the right conditions, the time, the expert support and the dedication required will I find myself once again lost for words.

With that in mind, I would extend my thanks and admiration to all of you here today. To the expert staff from SUNCETT who have worked alongside you, to any visitors who are here to understand what your colleagues or friends have been doing for the past year or more. Mostly, though, my thoughts must rest with the researchers here. Your work matters, possibly never more so than now, as our sector continues to evolve. For your passion, dedication, expertise and hard work: thank you. The answers may still be

slightly out of reach, obscured or hard to decipher, but it is only by looking for them together that we can help to understand how best to serve our learners, and how best to strive for excellence in all that we do.

Paul Kessell-Holland
Director of Insights, ETF

Conference Keynote: Dr Lynne Rogers

Dr Lynne Rogers is Reader in Education at UCL, Institute of Education. She is Co-Director of the Centre for Post-14 Education and Work and programme leader for the MA Professional Education and Training. She has long-standing interests in teacher/lecturer training and learning in further and higher education and other professional settings. During 2008-2010 she was the Director of the London Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training and throughout 2007-2010 she was the Faculty Director for Initial Teacher Education with overall responsibility for post compulsory pre- and in-service trainees, on full and part-time programmes of study.



She has extensive experience of education as a teacher and in a range of management positions prior to becoming an academic. She has undertaken research and published in relation to behaviour in school; disengagement from education including the role of alternative curricula; learning, studying and homework in adolescents; teaching and learning in FE, and issues relating to music education. Her recent book, *Disengagement from Education* (2016), focused on the experiences of young people aged 11 to 19 across a range of contexts including secondary, FE, young offender institutions and alternative provision.

Maggie Gregson: Professor of Vocational Education

Maggie Gregson is Professor of Vocational Education and Strategic Director of the University of Sunderland Centre for Excellence in Teaching Training (SUNCETT). She has a distinguished track record as a teacher-educator and educational researcher. Her research mainly focuses on the study of the nature of educational practice and the ways in which educational theory; practice and research are currently understood. Her first career was as a civil servant in the Department of Employment working as a Regional and National Policy Adviser in the development, implementation and evaluation of Education and Training policy in England. In 1990 she moved, first into initial teacher education posts and then into senior management roles in Further Education. She joined the University of Sunderland in 2000, teaching and leading the University's programmes of initial and continuing professional development for teachers in the post compulsory education and training sector. Since then, she has successfully directed many research projects, evaluations and consultancies for a range of funders and clients including the Education and Training Foundation, other government departments and agencies, local authorities, colleges and schools. She is a member of two national Expert Panels for the Education and Training Foundation. In 2013, she was invited to contribute to the work of the Commission for Adult and Vocational Teaching and (CAVTL). She is a peer reviewer for several publishers including, Open University Press, Palgrave Macmillan and Bloomsbury. She also acts as a peer-reviewer for a number of prestigious journals including, the Journal of Vocational Education and Training, the Journal of Education, Technology and Society and the Journal of Education Science. She also serves on the Editorial Board of *Intuition*, the professional journal of the Society for Education and Training. She has conducted research in collaboration with a number of other organisations and Universities including, the Learning and Skills Research Network project 'Thinking Skill Frameworks for Post-16 learners: an evaluation' (led by David Moseley, Newcastle University 2004) and the ESRC project 'The Impact of Policy upon Practice' (led by Professor Frank Coffield, UCL, 2008-2011).



In 2006, with her colleague Trish Spedding, she co-designed the original SUNCETT project. This project is currently one of the longest standing practitioner-research programmes on the FE landscape in England. She is now leading the latest ETF-funded Practitioner Research Project, which supports practitioner-research at MA/MPhil Level on a national scale. This project runs for five years from 2018-2023.

Trish Spedding: Associate Professor Learning & Teaching

My research interests focus on the Initial and Continuing Professional Development of Teachers. This involves critical engagement with theories of teaching, learning and assessment as well as explorations of understandings of the development of professional knowledge and practice. I draw on a range of disciplinary perspectives including, the philosophy of education, social theories of learning, policy development and issues in the implementation and evaluation of educational policy.

My first career was in librarianship. I then taught in Further, Adult, and Vocational Education (FAVE) for a number of years, before joining the University of Sunderland in 2002. In 2007, together with Professor Maggie Gregson, I successfully led the University's bid for the award of a national Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (SUNCETT). As a founder and co-director of SUNCETT, I have continued to manage the Centre's strands of research in the fields of assessment theory and practice, knowledge transfer and innovative pedagogy. I have reviewed for a number of prestigious publishers including Open University Press, Bloomsbury and Critical Publishing.

I am well known nationally for my work in supporting practitioner research in FAVE contexts. My recent publications include *Reflective Teaching in Further Adult and Vocational Education* and *Readings for Reflective Teaching in Further Adult and Vocational Education* (both published by Bloomsbury in 2015). Currently I am a contributing author and co-editor of *Practice-Focused Research in Further Adult and Vocational Education: Shifting Horizons of Educational Practice, Theory and Research*, due to be published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2019.

I was Programme Leader for the PGCE PCET at the University of Sunderland from 2003-2016. I currently teach across a wide range of educational programmes from undergraduate to MPhil/PhD Level.



Dr Lawrence Nixon: Principal Lecturer and Team Leader Post Compulsory Education and Training

Eric Wright tells us that "what is pragmatically possible is not fixed independently of our imagination, but is shaped by our vision". Wright challenges us to dream big about the future of education and to use these dreams to better navigate the imperfect conditions of our current classrooms and organisations. I think this is what makes working in Education so interesting and difficult, to make ambitions talk to practice in ways that make real changes for the better happen.

I have worked in Further and Higher Education for over 30 years. I have taught in colleges, in the community and at universities. I have worked for some time now in teacher education for the Post Compulsory Education and Training sector.

I have also been a core member of the Sunderland University Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (SUNCETT) team over the last nine years. In this role, I support teachers and trainers in the post compulsory sector to develop their practice and that of their organisations.



Daniel Gregson: Research Assistant and Academic Tutor

Completing my BA Honours degree in Primary Education with QTS in 2014 sparked my interest in the power of stories to engage learning, expand imagination and develop literacy. I joined the University of Sunderland in 2015, first as an Academic Tutor and then as a Research Assistant for SUNCETT. My work involves supporting teaching and research as part of a ETF-SUNCETT Practitioner Research Programme for teachers and education leaders from the Further, Adult and Vocational Education (FAVE) Sector across England. This programme, sponsored by Foundation supports the delivery of practitioner-research leads to the award of an MA Module, an MPhil Research Degree and in some cases progression to PhD. I also assist in the organisation and management of this Conference.



My research interests include the study of English Language and Literacy, in particular the development of creative approaches to teaching, learning and research. Initially, my research explored the potential of digital storytelling devices to develop children's motivation to write. More recently, my research focuses upon supporting the development of practitioner-research and creative teaching in the FAVE sector through innovative pedagogies. This includes the use of, Art, ICT and popular culture in the development of understanding of methodology and methods in research in the field of Education. I presented my research at the European Association for Practitioner Research on Improving Learning (EAPRIL), 2017 Conference in Finland, where I shared the findings of my research in the use of oral storytelling media in the primary classroom with an international audience of researchers and teachers. This paper has recently been published in the EAPRIL Conference 2017 Proceedings (ISSN 2406-4653) <https://www.eapril.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/%20Proceedings%202017.pdf>

Most recently I have presented my work (in collaboration with Trish and Maggie above) at the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) in the USA in April 2019. Our paper will be published in the *Journal of Management Policy and Practice* later this year. I am currently working with the SUNCETT Team and researchers from University College London, Sheffield College, Stirling University, and the University of South Wales, in the publication of a second edition of the already successful textbook *Reflective Teaching in Further Adult and Vocational Education*, which will be published by Bloomsbury in 2020 and *Practice-Focused Research in Further Adult and Vocational Education: Shifting Horizons of Educational Practice, Theory and Research*, scheduled for publication by Palgrave Macmillan also in 2020.

Meet the SQW Evaluation Team!

The Education and Training Foundation (ETF), have commissioned SQW (www.sqw.co.uk) to evaluate the Practitioner Research Programme to understand the impact that the Programme has had on participants and their employers. The SQW team include:



[Dr Jo Hutchinson](#) Project director with responsibility for research design, direction, conduct and completion. Jo has over twenty-five years of experience of applied research working in several universities and joining SQW in 2017. She is currently working for a range of clients including, Government Equalities Office, ETF, STEM Learning and the Careers and Enterprise Company.



Dr Alison Kay Project manager, responsible for team and client liaison, and day-to-day management. Alison is a former teacher who also worked for over two years in curriculum development in the US. She has over ten years of research and evaluation experience. She is currently working for a range of clients including MHCLG, Into Film, Skills Development Scotland, the NHS and Macmillan Cancer Support.



Jane Meagher Researcher responsible for delivery of qualitative research. Jane joined SQW with a PGCE in Secondary Education and three years teaching experience. Jane has supported a wide range of projects at SQW through consultations, case studies and focus groups including interviews with learners in a range of settings and focus group discussions with service users.

Over the next 18 months we will be conducting a range of fieldwork including focus groups at residential events, interviews with FE employers, and surveys with practitioner researchers on the programme. We will also be selecting a number of participants to invite them to be featured as case studies – this will be an opportunity to explore in greater depth the impact of engaging in practitioner research.

The work will be conducted in three phases with the scoping phase moving to completion in May / June 2019, an interim report due in March 2020 and a final report planned for October 2020.

If you have any questions about the evaluation, please do not hesitate to contact Alison Kay (Project Manager) akay@sqw.co.uk.

Pen Portrait: Annamarie Douglas

Anna Douglas job shares the role of Head of Evidence Informed Practice with Anne Hudson.

Anna has over 30 years of experience in education as a teacher, manager and senior leader, working predominantly in inner city London boroughs. She has worked across three education sectors including secondary schools, post 16 and HE, and held varied senior management and leadership positions, up to and including Principal level. Anna's experience spans all key areas in a college setting, from the strategic to the operational level of classroom practice.

In her different roles, Anna's focus has been the continuous professional growth and development of staff in tandem with the imperative to improve teaching, learning and assessment practice. Anna has also led significant curriculum change in academic and vocational provision, this has enhanced her knowledge and understanding of different subject requirements and pedagogic practice.

She has maintained an active interest in academic and practitioner educational research, in particular, how the insights gained can be used to enhance and support leaders' and teachers' day to day practice. Anna's expertise includes leadership and governance, organisational development, teacher professional learning, quality assessment and improvement.



Pen Portrait: Anne Hudson

Anne Hudson shares the role of Head of Evidence Informed Practice with Anna Douglas. They lead on ensuring that ETF programmes are evidence and research informed with a view to furthering this approach in the post 16 sector.

Anne has been a teacher since 1985. She has taught in a range of schools including in Waltham Forest, Tower Hamlets, Lewisham and Lambeth. She has extensive senior leadership experience, including 13 years' headship of two large London secondary schools. Prior to joining the Foundation in 2019, Anne was Headteacher of Langley Park School for Girls from 2011-2018 and in that time founded Langley Park Academies Trust. She has She holds the National Professional Qualification in Headship as well as a PhD in Education. She is firmly committed to lifelong learning and believes we teach best when we are learning ourselves. She has promoted action research in schools. Her expertise includes teacher training, leadership and governance and school inspection.



Education and Training Foundation Annual Research Conference 2019		
Improving Educational Practice Through Educational Research		
Time	Programme Event	
9:30am	Registration (Lower Ground) Coffee (Voysey) and Poster Exhibition	Brewer and Smith
10.00	Opening Address: SUNCETT Team	Brewer and Smith
10:05	Keynote Address: Paul Kessell-Holland, ETF & Launch of Practitioner Research Programme 2019-2020	Brewer and Smith
10.25	Welcome: Anne Hudson and Anna Douglas, ETF	Brewer and Smith
10:30	Keynote Address: Dr Lynne Rogers, University College London	Brewer and Smith
Realising the Realities of Practice-Focused Research Across the FE and Skills Sector		
11.00 12.25	Parallel Session 1 Curriculum Design	Arnold Room Lower Ground Floor
	Parallel Session 2 Development of Professional Practice	Morris Room Lower Ground Floor
	Parallel Session 3 ESOL & Language Development	Heschel Room Ground Floor
	Parallel Session 4 Educational Uses of Technology	Emerson Room Ground Floor
12.30-13.00	John Cooper (Sussex Downs College) and Lynne Taylerson (Real Time Education) Developing Research Capacity Within the Sector : Two Case Studies	Brewer and Smith
13.00	Networking Lunch (Voysey) and Poster Exhibition	Brewer and Smith
Realising the Realities of Practice-Focused Research Across the FE and Skills Sector		
13.45-13.55	Announcements: ETF- University of Sunderland 1st International Research Conference 6th -9th July 2020, <i>Practice Focused Research in Education</i> ,	Brewer and Smith
13.55-14.55	Parallel Session 5 Curriculum Leadership	Arnold Room Lower Ground Floor
	Parallel Session 6 Curriculum Design & Development	Morris Room Lower Ground Floor
	Parallel Session 7 Creative Arts and Industries	Emerson Room Ground Floor
14.55 15.05	Networking Break and Coffee	Voysey
15.05-15.20	Dr Lynne Rogers Summary Comments and Reflections on the Day	Brewer and Smith

<p>15.20-15.50</p>	<p>Table Talk</p> <p>What Makes Practitioner Research Work? What do ETF Need Know About Practitioner Research?</p> <p>Q & A Panel</p> <p>Dr Lynne Rogers, Paul Kessell-Holland, Professor Maggie Gregson, Dr. Lawrence Nixon, Associate Professor Trish Spedding, John Cooper and Lynne Taylerson.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Brewer and Smith</p>
<p>15.50-16.00</p>	<p>Evaluation, Thanks and Close</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Brewer and Smith</p>

Parallel Sessions 1 - 4
Time: 11:00am - 12:25pm

Parallel Session 1 - 4, Themes and Room	Presenter Name and Project Title
<p>Parallel Session 1</p> <p>Theme: Curriculum Design</p> <p>Room: Arnold (Lower Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 11:00am - 12:25pm</p>	<p>Daniel Creed 'Study Programmes: the policy practice gap'.</p> <p>Matell Baines 'Their Defining moments. Narratives of critical incidents and key influences that prompted progression into post compulsory education in the Arts'.</p> <p>Beth Curtis 'Can we talk about this? Examining the use of dialogic learning to support the integration of theory and practice in A Level Drama'.</p> <p>Linda Hunter 'Language is Power. Let's talk about our obsession with written feedback: a study in the paradoxical relationship between written and oral feedback'.</p>
<p>Parallel Session 2</p> <p>Theme: Development of Professional Practice</p> <p>Room: Morris (Lower Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 11:00am - 12:25pm</p>	<p>Joyce I-Hui Chen 'Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging further education (FE) college lecturers in professional learning'.</p> <p>Joy Evans 'Is 'stretch and challenge' the missing ingredient in the recipe for a good further education or is it a stretch too far?'</p> <p>David Galloway 'Standing on the shoulders of giants, the 'Teacher's Takeaway' Case Study : An exploration into the possibilities to effectively share 'good</p>

	<p>practice' over the internet in a bid to save time and improve the craft of teaching'.</p> <p>Ruth Richardson 'The value and impact of informal learning on the professional development of teachers'.</p>
<p>Parallel Session 3</p> <p>Theme: ESOL and Language Development</p> <p>Room: Herschel (Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 11:00am - 12:25pm</p>	<p>Marcin Lewandowski: 'Beyond Individual Learning Plans - exploring goal setting methodology with adult learners'.</p> <p>Sophia White 'An investigation into the efficacy of 'learning by stealth' with Syrian refugees in the ESOL context'.</p> <p>Sarah Peters 'Read like a butterfly, write like a bee: Discuss!': investigating the potential of an integrated circles pedagogy for the development of English language skills and shared understandings in an ESOL context'.</p> <p>Kate Green 'Mission impossible? How can tutors support active learner progress through purposeful assessment feedback in post compulsory education?'</p>
<p>Parallel Session 4</p> <p>Theme: Educational Uses of Technology</p> <p>Room: Emerson Room (Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 11:00am - 12:25pm</p>	<p>Will Cossey: Curriculum design for collaboration in the classroom: Redesigning space for vocational students in the digital age</p> <p>Helen Irish 'Can Learning Beyond the Classroom Improve Retention and Inclusion?'</p> <p>Graham Pitchforth 'Back to the Future, Forward to the Past: Exploring the importance of craftsmanship in the development and delivery of digital education'</p> <p>Gordon Duffy-McGhie 'Educating the educators: vocational teachers' experiences implementing technical education reform through enhanced Continuing Professional Development (CPD)'.</p>

Parallel Sessions 5 - 7
Time: 1:55 pm - 2:55 pm

Parallel Session, Themes and Room	Presenter and Title
<p>Parallel Session 5</p> <p>Theme: Curriculum Leadership</p> <p>Room: Arnold (Lower Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 1:55 pm - 2:55 pm</p>	<p>Martin Scott 'The good, the bad and the ugly of teaching GCSE Maths: an investigation into team development in an FE environment of continual change.'</p> <p>Celia Geen 'Putting Practice First: teacher-led professional development in action'.</p> <p>James Tarling 'See you on the other side.Reimagining the vocational curriculum with flow psychology: what is the student experience of the TAPOUT curriculum model and how do they perceive the most important characteristics that nurture flow?'</p>
<p>Parallel Session 6</p> <p>Theme:Curriculum design and development</p> <p>Room: Morris (Lower Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 1:55 pm - 2:55 pm</p>	<p>Enda McBrien 'Stand Like a Boxer: In Defence of Vocational Education'.</p> <p>Rachel Bate 'Finding a voice: developing pedagogy for the ESOL classroom'.</p> <p>Jacklyn Williams 'Making the best of both worlds: establishing guiding principles for curriculum development that bridges the academic/vocational divide'.</p>
<p>Parallel Session 7</p> <p>Theme: Creative Arts and Industries</p> <p>Room: Emerson (Ground Floor)</p> <p>Time: 1:55 pm - 2:55 pm</p>	<p>Lucy Driver Williams 'A Good Education and the Foundation Diploma in Art and Design'.</p> <p>Frances Norton 'Deflecting risk, increasing citizenship: JPD Debate Club at two FE colleges, exploring the potential impact of critical thinking strategies'.</p> <p>Oliver Cameron-Swan 'Observe, Imitate, Modify, Transcend: Encouraging the development of photographic practice to support portfolio career paths for Degree Level Arts students'.</p>

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Name: John Cooper
Institution: Sussex Downs College

**'Breaking the Cycle of Failure:
the effects of a mastery approach in FE maths'.**

Contact-info: john.cooper@sussexdowns.ac.uk

This research study aims to investigate the effects of employing a pedagogy based on a mastery approach when teaching maths in UK Further Education settings. The "Essential 8" maths resource materials are used to structure the scheme of work.

Dewey's (1933) Pragmatism is applied to the mastery concept, particularly the ideas surrounding the experience of a group who are teaching and learning together. This shifts focus from the attainment of the individual learner to the collective success of the whole learning cohort. Capturing the experiences of learners forms Critical Incidents which offer glimpses into the effect the pedagogy is having on young people re-sitting their maths GCSEs.

Summative exams are interpreted as the *disturbance* metaphor that Biesta (2003, 2010) proposes, whilst the learning environment is considered in the light of Dewey's *situation*. The learning that occurs appears to sometimes exceed the teaching that is given. Polanyi's (1958) account of *tacit knowing* is examined in this light. Plowright's mixed method framework is used to organise the data which are derived from surveys, numerical analysis of performance, narrative inquiry and personal interviews.

The nature of mastery teaching and learning is called into question as more contributors claim their versions as definitive. The central tenets of mastery are distilled for the purpose of this study, forming the basis for the 'Essential 8' resources. At its centre, this study asks whether there is a case for educationalists being less concerned with what is being taught, in favour of finding out how best it may be learnt.

Keywords: Pragmatism; mathematics mastery; tacit knowledge; John Dewey; narrative enquiry; FE; Essential 8; GCSE resits.



Name: Lynne Taylorson
Institution: Real Time Education

'Growing Concerns: practitioners' positions on engaging in Continuing Professional Development in a deregulated Further and Vocational Education (FAVE) sector'.

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This research study investigates the value of informal online communities to the continuing professional development (CPD) of practitioners working in the FAVE sector in England. Recent ETF workforce data (ETF, 2018) inform us that almost 40% of respondents considered that some CPD they had undertaken did not meet their needs and a third described some mandatory training as having 'little or no value'. Educators' participation in formal CPD is declining (UCU, 2016), yet informal, social media-based dialogues appear to be growing in popularity and rhizomatic online communities are growing in number. A netnographic study (Kozinets, 2015) using social network analysis techniques, rendered using graphical mapping strategies, was used to analyse dialogues on 3 Twitter-based educators' communities over a 6-month period. Thematically, these dialogues can be said to come into focus under 3 lenses. Discourses under the '*Pedagogy*' and '*Learning Community*' lens align to sector development priorities, showing teachers collaborating to build not only technique but also practical wisdom (Dunne, 1993). Values-informed, political engagement is a key part of educators' identities evidenced under the '*Identity and Voice*' lens. These dialogues concern praxis in its fullest sense (Freire, 1968), addressing teacher identity and agency and prizing democratic learning for students. Participants advocate for social purpose education, framing their role as empowerment and emancipation of individual learners and their families and communities. Discourses oppose the neoliberal 'learning for earning' agenda (Biesta, 2005: 688) and question reductive, 'tick box' approaches to both learning and the judgement of teachers' performance (Coffield, 2017). Focus groups and 1-1 interviews allow member checking of the netnographic activity, reinforcing the validity of the '3 lens' model and affording richer responses on the impact of informal professional learning. Though the vast majority of participants did not document informal, online activity as CPD or disseminate outcomes from it in their organisations, value was gained from the online community activity. Participants report that online discourses went some way to replacing the learning communities lost when fractional contract working and time pressures erode staffroom culture. Participating educators report that online community participation allows them to engage in challenging dialogues, explore alternative pedagogies and discover resources, research and networking opportunities, subverting the dominant paradigm with informal learning.



Key Words: Continuing Professional Development (CPD); informal on-line learning; social network.

Name: Deborah Abrey and Ruksana Patel
Institution: College of Haringey, Enfield and North London.

'Exploring New Frontiers: Curriculum Evolution in Travel and Tourism'

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This research study explores the question of what should inform the curriculum design and theory of Travel and Tourism courses offered in a large Further Education College in an inner city in the South East of England. The purpose of this research is to address issues and concerns in curriculum design and theory, enable the travel team at the college to design and deliver a curriculum that engages students, captures their interest, drives recruitment and meets employer needs in the sector.

The main aim of this research is to explore how such a curriculum could be designed, implemented and evaluated. The intention here is to design a curriculum which values process and the quality of student experience as much as outcomes. In other words the means of achieving educational objectives are as if not more important than the ends. In addition, this research will look into the vital links between tourism education and industry.

This research further illuminates issues of credibility and relevance in the current curriculum on offer. The study notes how students' demand for tourism courses is often seen as an escape route to a jet set lifestyle. Consequently, the curriculum needs to satisfy employer expectations.

This small-scale study hopes to uncover and inform mind-sets and perceptions of schools, parents and students about the travel courses. The key concern here are the misconceptions of those involved about the vast job opportunities in this industry. This research is undertaken using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Interviews are conducted with external stakeholders and other Further Education providers to gain an insight to the expectations of the industry and learners' experiences of the curriculum on offer. Preliminary findings suggest that stakeholder engagement is essential for the success of any curriculum offered. The work of Stenhouse (1975) 'Humanities Project' and Bernstein's (1982) 'Pedagogic Rights' contribute to the discussion and the findings of this research. This study is funded by the Education and Training Foundation.

Key Words: Curriculum design; process-curriculum model; pedagogy; curriculum theory.

Name: Mark Beetlestone
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'Why stop there?: an exploration of practitioner attitudes towards Technology Enhanced Learning'.

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It is no secret that practitioners in the Education sector in the UK feel bombarded with an onslaught of constant measuring, testing and re-measuring in order to meet standards which are ever changing. In the current climate of continual data gathering and analysis, this study asks if teachers ever hope to keep up when the benchmarks and goalposts are constantly on the move? Coffield (2006) points out that we are witnessing the main tensions within the sector being played out in the professional lives of staff, between competition and collaboration, standardisation and innovation, centralisation and local flexibility, enabling and controlling strategies and long term sustainability and short term goals and targets. This research study focuses on the pedagogical issue of practitioner confidence, with a particular emphasis on the use of educational technology in practice. It explores the barriers which inhibit the realisation of fulfilling learning experiences supported by technology in the classroom. Through anonymous surveys and interviews with stakeholders this study builds a picture, small in scale but rich in the authentic flavours of the real reasons why teachers do not engage with educational technology. Sennett (2008) reminds us, a practice is something which is acquired over time not overnight. If we wish to create artisanal practitioners then we must create an environment in which artisanship can flourish. Initial findings suggest that there is an appetite among teaching practitioners for a greater understanding of how to improve their digital literacy, but they are faced with a couple of prominent and important (but ultimately surmountable) obstacles. One of these is largely an organisational issue. that of time. It appears that the iterative and incremental demands involved in the process of learning and using something new (including technology) are not yet well understood in programmes of CPD for teachers. The second barrier is a lack of support for teachers in trying to implement something new in the context of their classrooms. This study suggests that the challenge now before us is to explore how programmes of CPD can be developed in the light of these emerging findings to make Technology Enhanced Learning less of an elusive aspiration and more of a reality.



Key Words: Educational technology; digital literacy; wellbeing; continuous professional development.

Name: Simon Bond and Martin Hoskin
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'Assessment methods have moved on but assessment feedback has not: using digital technology to provide effective feedback'.

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The use of digital technologies in teaching and learning is high on the policy agenda and advancing.

However, the way in which assessment feedback is provided appears to lack the same level of development. With increased time constraints for delivery and assessment, coupled with often strict and varied guidelines for feedback, the potential benefits of digital feedback to both practitioner and students are appealing.

The primary focus of this study is to assess student engagement and perceptions of digital feedback in contrast to written feedback on Level 3 vocational Study Programmes. Questionnaires containing both open and Likert scale questions were administered to 73 students about their experiences of feedback and following the use of Audio and visual feedback through Google for Education add-ons, Kaizena and Screencastify. Common themes identified by students relating to what they expect from feedback, indicate the desire for more personal, specific and helpful dialogue. In line with similar research, (Hope, 2011, Mayhew, 2017 and Ryan, Henderson & Phillips, 2016), preliminary results suggest that student expectations might be better met through the use of digital technology. Students reported positive perceptions of the detail and quality of feedback reported that received from the technologies used in the study. Digital feedback was valued higher by the majority of students and in turn apprehension towards using digital technology reduced. Surprisingly, despite feedback being viewed as more personal and helpful through the implementation of digital technologies, student engagement with feedback appears unchanged. Results of this study have given rise to future research questions surrounding the use and implementation of digital technologies for feedback from both student and practitioners view points. The effectiveness and efficiency of digital technologies for practitioners combined with whether it actually supports any expected improvement of work and student behaviour are aspects of the study worthy of further exploration in the future.

Key Words: Assessment; feedback; digital technology; perceptions; engagement.

Name: Jasmine Course

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'Choice, what choice?'

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Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today.

(Malcolm X, 1964)

According to information from the Home Education in England Briefing Paper (House of Commons Library, 23.5.18) also published by BBC, in 2016-17, 48,000 children in the UK (an increase of 40% from 2014-15) have 'chosen' to be home educated. This research explores the extent to which this always a choice. If the answer is no, the issue then becomes why is this so and how we can reintegrate 'home-schooled' learners who would like to go to FE college so that they enjoy, achieve and succeed? The research study considers historical factors that have shaped the current educational system in England (Ball, 2017). It then compares the English education system with the system in Finland (Sahlberg, 2018). (Coffield, 2008) invites us to consider the issue of what education is for, including whether it is seen as a competitive business or a process of leading to living a fulfilled life Dewey, 1933). This research discusses how key factors in systems of education impact on the number of elective home educated (EHE) children, the potential issues this brings and the steps that Further Education (FE) colleges could take to encourage some of this group of learners to progress into their institutions. With growing numbers of home educated students in England, this study asks what FE colleges are doing to support the needs of those learners previously in home education? It reveals how some home learners are socially withdrawn, anxious, not able to attend fully and occasionally have emotional and/or physical outbursts. It explores if/how time could be better spent by being proactive rather than reactive in providing home educated learners with a better educational experiences in FE which might have a positive impact on their mental health and achievement? Following a review of literature regarding historical factors shaping the English educational system, a sample of learners, aged 15-18, who had previously been home educated, participated in semi-structured interviews sharing their experiences before, during and after being home educated. Initial findings suggest that a 'one size fits all' strategy does not work and that a 'menu' of transition and support opportunities to select from, could be more appropriate in addressing and overcoming the reasons why they had to be home educated in the first place. The question is what can we do to ensure every child is able to access their pedagogic rights in institutions of education where they feel that they belong and that they have some say over what they belong to.



Key Words: Elective Home Education (EHE), pedagogic rights, transition to college.

Name: Amy Donnelly
Institution: Tameside College

'Tiers of joy? Researching the impact of differentiation through tiered tasks on GCSE English resit students'.

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Since the introduction of compulsory GCSE English resits, the achievement and experience this group of students is often discussed in the press and in policy circles as a cause for concern (TES 2018). One of the core problems cited by the teaching profession is low-motivation with these students (DoE 2017). Differentiation is often discussed as being effective teaching practice (OFSTED 2019, DoE 2017, DoE 2011), linked to increasing motivation and improved achievement (see Taylor 2017).

However, what differentiation is, and which method is effective, is not well understood, often debated and with mixed results (see Taylor 2017 for an overview). This research aims to focus on one aspect of differentiation known as tiered tasks, with students studying the same topic in lessons, but with students' tasks differing depending on the current skills and attainments of students. This model of differentiation is one of the widely debated methods with some arguing that students completing different activities at different levels in a class can be beneficial (Richards and Omdal, 2007; DoE, 2017), while others suggest that the impact is minimal (Hattie, 2011; OFSTED, 2019). This research reports emerging findings from classes in which students completed tiered tasks at different levels depending on students' achievements in relation to the topic assessed at the start of the research. These were compared to classes without these "tiered" tasks. The motivation, confidence, and achievement of these students was measured through mixed research methods (questionnaires, group interviews, and assessment results).

Preliminary findings suggest that there are some positive benefits of tiered tasks in relation to students' confidence and motivation. However the study also found that this is not reflected in the students' achievement. These conclusions, however, are drawn tentatively and with some caution as the difference in motivation and confidence between the two groups is small, as was the size of each of the classes researched. Despite this, it did appear that tiered tasks may be a method that indicated some benefit towards student motivation. This is something that could be measured more widely in future. Furthermore, future research could utilise similar research methods could be used to assess the effectiveness of other aspects of differentiation. All this would need to explore in greater depth why tiered methods may be successful as well as the reasons why these may not always transfer into an increase in student achievement.

Key Words: Tiered tasks; differentiation; assessment.



Name: Ellen Fishwick

Institution: East Durham College

'Why do I need maths GCSE when I only want to be a brickie?'

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This small-scale research project investigates why vocational learners do not fully engage with GCSE mathematics as an integral part of Study Programmes. The Wolf Review (2011) is critical of existing vocational qualification frameworks in England. One of the recommendations from the Report was that GCSE maths and English should be integrated into programmes of vocational education. This research study indicates how despite good intentions, this policy has had a number of unintended consequences in practice. Conditions of funding stipulate that students who have not achieved GCSE Grade C (4) or above, must continue to study maths and English as part of their Study Programme regardless of their vocational aim. Tutors in FE colleges across England are now struggling to bring coherence and relevance to curriculum design and pedagogy in Study Programmes. This problem is compounded by another factor - vocational students engaged in Study Programmes do not see the relevance of approaches adopted in Study Programmes to the development of numerical skills as they are currently taught and assessed in GCSEs. This manifests itself in poor attendance and lack of motivation. Narrative inquiry (Connelly and Clandinnen, 1990), combined with a case study approach are used to highlight experiences of tutors and students engaged in the delivery of Study Programmes. Open Forum sessions focusing upon the background, career aspirations and motivation of students engaged in the research provide a fuller picture. Observations of teaching and learning practice are examined to highlight strategies and explore areas of curriculum design and pedagogical practice that could be improved. Keller's Model of motivation (2009) and Sennett's (2008) framework of the processes involved in the development of craftsmanship, inform the analysis of data sets collected. Initial findings suggest that students do not see the point of studying maths *outside* of their chosen vocational subject area. Data from tutors and students also indicate that the numerical skills required vocational curricula (in this case) the bricklaying curriculum are already embedded well understood and that the challenge is more how these numerical skills can be developed and assessed more effectively to demonstrate achievement at GCSE Level.



Key Words: Vocational learning; maths; Further Education; 16-19 Study Programmes, craftsman, motivation.

Name: Jo Fletcher-Saxon
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'Building a Bridge (to your Heart): Creating a Community of Practitioner Enquiry and Scholarship in a Sixth Form College'.

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This study offers an account of the challenges and impact of introducing a new programme of continuing professional development (CPD) with staff in a sixth form college. The existing CPD programme worked very well from the college perspective and appeared to be meeting the needs of many, but not all staff. The top-down nature of the existing programme and its lack of choice is identified as a central concern. This study explores the challenges and impact of introducing a practitioner enquiry group.

The research population for this study included 9 colleagues who joined the group from September 2018 to July 2019. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 6 of the group's participants plus the college principal. Reflective accounts were kept of group meetings and a semi-structured group interview was carried out with 3 staff at another sixth form college. Interviews were transcribed and sketch notes of interviews were created and later shared with interviewees to strengthen the warrant of findings. Early results suggest that practitioner research could be impacting upon the development of agency (Willegems, 2017) and influencing practitioner identity. Labels are emerging as potentially both hindering and helping. Other emerging findings are the importance of spaces and time to talk, time to trial new approaches and raised confidence engaging with research literature. Participants report a greater sense of research anchored in practice and the value of a critically reflective space. A key finding from this study has been that success is underpinned by the creation of conditions within which relationships of trust can thrive in the pursuit of developing practice.

The programme has benefited from the building of relationships within the organisation and beyond. Weaving a web of connections and support is referred to as 'rhizomatic' by Sidebottom (2018) and has proven to be vital. As a result of this programme, colleagues from outside of the group are showing an interest in both the results and action research and the Senior Management Team have adopted this aspect of professional development going forward. Data related to the longer-term impacts are the results of the participants' research and will be included in the final report.

Key Words: Professional development, practitioner enquiry, critically reflective space.



Name: Harriet Griffey
Institution: Exeter College

'Mastery in GCSE Maths re-sits: should we teacher fewer topics in greater depth?'

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Building on the work of Cooper (2016), this research aims to address the continuing challenge of motivation and engagement in GCSE maths re-sit classes and answer the question "why do so many students in Further Education have a negative attitude towards GCSE maths?" Previous research and observations suggest that the large GCSE maths curriculum plays a part in learners feeling overwhelmed and anxious about re-sitting their exams, whilst also reinforcing the pre-conception that they will be repeating a curriculum that they have experienced at school. This study investigates how a slimmed-down curriculum design

and a focus on mastery can affect classroom attitude. Cooper (2016) devised the "Essential 8", a pedagogical intervention in the teaching of mathematics covering 8 topics that attract the award of the most marks in the GCSE maths exam. This study employs these 8 topics as a starting point for curriculum design. This research was carried out by 3 practitioners in a large urban Further Education College in the South West of England. It involves sample of 16-18 year olds currently studying on a GCSE maths course. A focus group with other FE institutions in the South West met to discuss the outcomes of the results, which is supported by the NCETM (National Centre for Excellence in Teaching Mathematics). The 8 topics were taught to the sample group over a 10 week period, and their progress was recorded on a tracker. These topics were repeated in every lesson for the duration of the study. Students had the opportunity to give their feedback and analyse the effectiveness of this change to the curriculum. The study concludes with recommendations and a discussion of emerging findings.



Key Words: GCSE mathematics; essential 8; curriculum design; pedagogy.

Name: Jamie Kernen
Institution: Sunderland College

We don't know where we're going because you don't know where we've been", The road to *knowwhere*: exploring ways to mitigate previous negative educational experiences.

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This small-scale research study aims to provide clarity around the perennial problem of why learners are disengaged when it comes to the study of GCSE English language or even more problematically the resit. "Forcing young people into a round of resits when the large majority fail can be extremely demotivating and disheartening" (NAHT, 2019). Current government policy dictates that learners failing to achieve a minimum Grade 4 at school are required to enrol onto a GCSE English course alongside their chosen vocational or academic programme of study. Prior to 2018 our GCSE English department accepted those who achieved a Grade 3, now in 2019 the department accepts learners with a Grade 2, focusing on positive progress measure rather than higher grades (Grade 4+). This brings a wider range of issues including how to plan for with one constant across all learners, the lack of motivation to study the subject again, a subject that already holds memories of difficulty and failure! This research focuses on getting to know learners' previous experiences. Following the work of Sammons (et al, 2015) who looked at the primary and secondary sector, researching into learners' views and experiences of school, the aim of this small-scale study is to explore the previous experiences of learners using a range of questionnaires and 1-1 interviews. This research is conducted in a large F.E. college in England, capturing the previous experiences of 65 GCSE English language resit learners, ages ranging from 16-19. The qualitative interview data and quantitative survey data highlight a similar pattern with learners recognising the importance of the subject and the impact it has upon their future prospects. Many of their experiences recount a similar tale "I was ignored", "the teacher changed every few weeks", "I didn't know what I was doing". This study aims to address these issues and work with learners to help overcome their disengagement, using regular 1-1 meetings, setting collaborative SMART targets. The research concludes that learners benefit from the opportunity to collaboratively engage with lecturers, setting meaningful targets that address bespoke concerns.



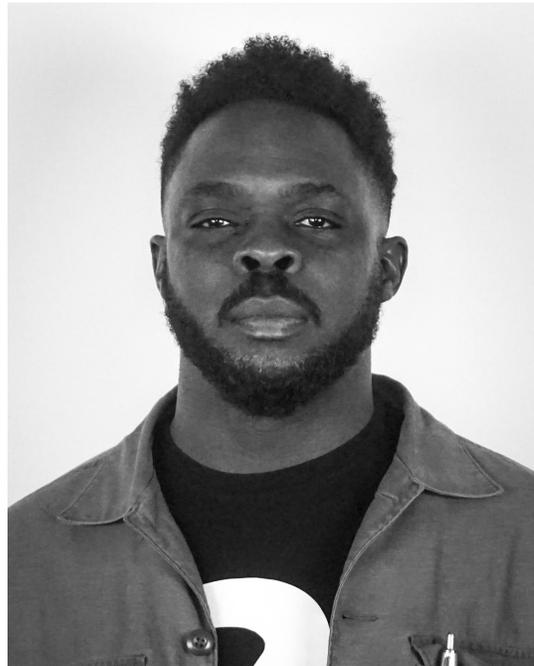
Key Words: GCSE English; resit; disengagement.

Name: Frederick Larbi
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‘ A Supported Experiments Story :‘Can Popular Culture Enhance Engagement ?- A Simple ‘Try and Feedback’ Campaign’ for Teachers’.

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This small-scale research study is part of a wider, whole-college collaborative activity known as ‘Supported Experiments’ which aims to get all staff more personally involved in the development of their practice. Teachers are encouraged to try something new then feedback on the changes to one of twelve, *Supported Experiments Ambassadors*. As one of the Ambassadors, I have been involved in the ‘Supported Experiments’ project across a number of departments . Geoff Petty ‘Improve your Teaching and that of your Team’ (2019)



<http://geoffpetty.com/for-team-leaders/supported-experiments/>

It soon became clear to me that implementing change is challenging and just expecting staff to get on board takes time and support. Teachers wanted some direction and specification about the type of possible changes to practice they could apply for themselves (William 2018). This ETF-SUNCETT project focuses on how popular culture impacts on learning in the Foundation Learning Department. As an innovator in teaching maths and having had success with engagement and attendance in my own classes (partly through the use of popular culture) we decided together that we would trial and track the use of popular culture to enhance engagement in classes – something that Foundation Learning students commonly struggle with. As the project progressed and after further collaborative discussions the focus was narrowed down to exploring the, ‘use of music’ to develop positive engagement in lessons. So far eight teachers have participated in interactive focus groups and audio & video recordings and an Online Student Survey has been conducted.

Early findings indicate that heightened engagement is taking place. For example, some teachers use music as background, others as a teaching resource. The study found that classical and jazz music have the strongest effects on student engagement and that instrumental music is preferable to music with lyrics.

Key Words: Mathematics; music; creative teaching.

Name: Joanne Martin
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**'Are all blended learning activities created equal?:
evaluating the impact of blended learning activities on student
engagement'.**

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There is a wealth of literature on blended learning (Gyamfi & Gyaase, 2015) but evaluation of blended learning activities is often limited to a case study of one resource. Sharpe et al, (2006) acknowledge a lack of pedagogical research evaluating blended e-learning. The aim of this small-scale study is to investigate a variety of blended learning activities, to evaluate engagement and if blended learning aids students' understanding of the topic area. A secondary aim is to discover if there were any differences between the interaction with the blended activities and the grades achieved. The research stems from a need to change the delivery model to enable more students to participate on a part-time course.



This research investigates the differences between teaching on traditional face-to-face classroom-based programmes and blended learning programmes. Using five student cohorts on an undergraduate Business HND programme, this research takes a pragmatic, multi-method approach. This includes ethnography and surveys that feed into informal discussions, followed by a final survey on the different activities used.

Results suggest that watching YouTube videos and writing tasks were amongst the top three activities with which students engaged. Well-designed power-points, that included additional information that the students could refer to in their own time came first in student engagement and improving understanding. Key considerations for improving future blended-learning design are; individual motivation, presentation and access of the virtual learning environment as well as the relevance of activities used. Virtual networks employed in the research have opened up conversations about the use of blended learning for teaching. The impact on student learning has been largely positive with students using the activities to good effect. Although we always need to remember as one student said "*it is not your fault if we don't do the work, you have given us everything we need. We just have to do it*"

Key Words: Blended-learning; activities; engagement; e-learning; understanding.

Name: Eva Mosquera
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'Practical teaching and learning strategies for theoretical vocational sessions'.

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This project focuses on identifying practical teaching and learning strategies as specific tools for use by vocational teachers in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in theoretical sessions. The organisation's Self-Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan both identify that teaching and learning in vocational theoretical sessions as 'requiring improvement'. This project is therefore relevant and supports the organisation's strategic aims.



A collaborative approach to implementation (Coffield, 2008) is used with two vocational teachers, one from Beauty and one from Construction. Both agreed to participate and assist in the study by trialling a range of teaching and learning strategies. My role entails managing the study through instructive collaboration, suggesting the strategies to trial, trialling the strategies with my own learners and bringing the practitioners together in a Focus Group to discuss and provide feedback about the effectiveness of the strategies used. Observation is also used as an informative and supportive method to assist the teachers in the implementation of the strategies.

The work of Lucas (2012), Toth (2012) and Schneider (2013) influence this project as their research focuses on practical teaching and learning strategies that assist vocational teachers when planning, designing and delivering theoretical sessions.

Preliminary findings on student engagement and achievement are promising and the most successful strategies identified are, problem-solving exercises, technology integration and a mix of collaboration and competitive activities that are 'short and snappy'. Findings also suggest that further exploration of how these teaching and learning strategies are implemented is required. Interest amongst colleagues is being generated through informal discussions and the findings are to be promoted in the new academic year on teaching and learning quality days.

Key Words: Theories of learning; vocational; teaching and learning strategies; student engagement; achievement.

Name: Garry Nicholson
Institution: Newcastle City Council

'Going digital whilst staying human: what are the barriers and benefits of using e-portfolios in the FE sector'.

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The use and implementation of e-portfolios in Higher Education has been extensively researched in recent decades. In comparison, little research has been done into their value to the FE sector, particularly with learners on non-apprenticeship programmes of study. Existing literature largely focuses on two key areas, that of the issues surrounding implementation and the perceived educational benefits of e-portfolios. Much of the research, particularly by Kilbane and Milman (2004), Jenkins et al (2012) and Wuetherick and Dickinson (2015) highlights the need to bring together the 'right' pedagogy with the 'right' technology when introducing e-portfolios into academic institutions. This paper explores tutor and student perceptions of e-portfolio use in a medium-sized local authority education provider, unpacking some of the benefits and barriers to e-portfolio use.

The research took place during the first year of e-portfolio implementation with scepticism and uncertainty running high. Whilst seeking to gather the views of all tutors in the organisation, particular focus is given to three programmes - L1 Beauty Therapy, L2 Supporting Teaching and Learning and LLDD learners in the workplace. Two main research methods are utilised, surveys and case studies formed through interviews and focus groups. The research concludes that there is widespread agreement on the potential of e-portfolios in facilitating holistic assessment and tracking progress, with tutor buy-in being identified as a key part of encouraging learners to embrace the technology. This study highlights two areas of concern that need to be addressed - how e-portfolios can be developed as collaborative learning spaces which have value to learners and tutors and what are the potential shortcomings of developing e-portfolios that are designed to achieve and track time-bound and specific criteria. In the short-term, the impact of this research has been to inform the debate about e-portfolios and their impact on pedagogy. Through the presentation of research at two whole-college CPD events, the debate has become less polarised. As one tutor put it, 'I need to be a bit less King Canute about this and start to work out the best way to use e-portfolios for me and the learners.'

Key Words: E-portfolio; holistic assessment; collaborative learning ; tracking, technology.



Name: Christine Osborne

Institution: Buckinghamshire College Group

'Lost in translation :An investigation into the cycle of feedback to develop thinking skills and improve performance'.

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This research explores the relationship between teacher feedback and how students use it to develop their awareness of their own learning so that learning moves forward. Teachers often comment when marking work that feedback has either not been read or misunderstood, as the new piece of work does not show any signs that the student has taken onboard advice previously given. Wiliam (2015) suggests that the purpose of feedback is to increase the extent to which learners are owners of their own learning and that this should involve more work for the student than the teacher. The challenge in this research is to find ways to address this so that feedback is seen and used by students as an opportunity to improve their performance. Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984) is used to highlight how feedback should prompt the learner to engage in the thought process of considering what to do next and experimenting with new learning. The aim of the research is therefore to develop strategies, which engage the students in thinking about the feedback, and asking themselves some key questions before submitting their next piece of work. The participants in this research are Level 3 learners (10 female, 1 male), whose performance at GCSE was at Grade 4 and above. Wiliam argues that the giving of grades has a negative impact because as soon as a grade is given, learning stops. The methodology used was not to Grade work on first submission of an assignment, but to provide feedback that the student could use effectively to make improvements. The Grade was awarded on final submission. Students completed two questionnaires; one before starting an assignment stating how they were going to use feedback which was reinforced through the use of a review sheet which they completed before handing in their work. Initial analysis of results shows improvements in students' Grades from their first to their final piece of work for the majority of students. Conclusions drawn are that the removal of grades is an effective strategy. However, this alone cannot be seen to have had an impact, as the challenge is to shift the students focus away from the Grade toward seeing feedback as a resource to students improve their approaches to learning and achievement.

Key Words: Feedback; Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS); grading; assessment.

Name: Irene Rambota

Institution: Buckinghamshire College Group

'Acting and Interacting: creating a community of learning through cross-age peer collaboration'.

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There is no lack of evidence regarding the benefits of peer learning. In 1984, William Damon, recognising the motivational and cognitive benefits of peer education, referred to it as 'the untapped potential'. Today William (2011) promotes the importance of peer assessment and using students as teaching resources for one another. However, much published research tends to focus on isolated assessments in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) subjects and English, in schools or higher education institutions. This study investigates a three-tier system of cross-age peer learning in a Level 3 Acting course at a further education college. First and Second year students and graduate volunteers interact to create a unique classroom culture where reciprocal peer teaching, learning and feedback. This is at the heart of daily practice on the programme. This system was developed over a number of years, having observed the benefits that this form of active and collaborative learning had on the students' emotional, social and academic development. Being an actor is innately to be a researcher, constantly observing, investigating, exploring and studying the complexity of the human condition. This study investigates why cross-age peer interaction among Acting students (roughly 16-24 years of age) has such a positive impact on their confidence, willingness to take risks, their emotional resilience, critical thinking skills and final grades. Data was collected in the form of class observations, videos, group discussions, student stories and responses to the research study questions. Several key findings emerged including *Confidence*: watching older peers take risks inspired students to work harder and push themselves outside their comfort zone; *Emotional Resilience*: seeing older peers exchange honest feedback on a daily basis enabled students to progress from taking feedback as negative criticism to embracing it positively as a powerful learning tool. *Critical thinking skills*: giving and receiving feedback developed students' higher level cognitive skills and deepened subject knowledge which was then applied to their own learning. What distinguishes this study is that the peer learning is cross-age, takes place in a vocational creative subject area in further education and, crucially, is a classroom culture that is assimilated daily, handed down with each student generation. How readily the positive outcomes can be disseminated to other curriculum areas is certainly a topic for further research.



Key Words: Peer learning; cross-age; peer assessment; collaborative learning.

Name: Alistair Smith and Hannah Dytam
Institution: Lincoln College

'Applying maths vocationally to produce a confident and competent workforce'.

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During a research project in 2017, in an interview an employer asked a question that managed to flip our thinking and our focus about the embedding of maths vocationally. The question posed by the employer set the challenge for this study, in that it invited us to look at ways to embed maths vocationally in order to support the wider development of a new workforce for the 21st Century. However, meeting the needs of all learners and employers is far from simple. It requires innovation, juggling competing priorities and conflicting demands, overcoming unexpected barriers, together with an overall need to provide a skilled workforce that is prepared for a future which we cannot fully predict. This research explores innovative ways to 'future proof' the workforce of the next 50 years with an aim of keeping them 'work ready' right up to their own retirement age. Embedding maths in vocational contexts is an aspect of practice in the FAVE sector identified as being in urgent need of attention. According to the Wolf report (2011) the gold standard in providing maths education to an acceptable level is the GCSE at C/4 or above. The counter to this is that a GCSE in maths does not always provide learners with the vocationally applicable maths they need to succeed in the workplace. Building upon interviews with employers, students and teachers the research led to the development and testing of these ideas. The project then arrived at the point of exploring the development of maths in the context of basic accountancy; invoicing, ordering, billing and working out hourly rates and time sheets. This range of topics transcended many vocational areas and needed little specialist knowledge of vocational teaching staff. Early findings have shown a positive response from the learners that have trialled the embedded vocationally focused maths content. Other teaching staff in the testing institution are keen to adapt and apply the concept to their own curriculum areas including the School of Art and Design. Other members of staff appreciate the way this intervention has been developed and the minimal prior maths knowledge needed by the vocational teaching staff. Plans are in hand to include the research findings in future CPD events.

Key Words: Embedding; maths; vocational; GCSE.

Name: Adam Ward

Institution: Tameside College

‘ “I get by with a little help from my friends”: the effects peer learning can have on the confidence of maths resit students’.

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‘Effective learning is facilitated by social interaction’ (Harkin, Turner and Down: 2001, pg. 52). This research addresses the issue around problem-solving skills of students taking a maths resit course (both Functional Skills and GCSE). In maths classes students can often feel that they are told how to do a skill then expected to carry it out in isolation with a right or wrong answer. This according to the literature (Hannula, 2002) and (The Research base, 2014) causes students to have negative emotions and attitudes towards maths before they even get into the classroom. These emotions and attitudes can stop students from exploring a task or communicating with others about tasks and problems. One of the main authors that writes on this topic, Wiliam (2018) states that peer tutoring can have just as strong effect as one-to-one tutoring. This study examines the extent to which peer learning (and assessment) can have an effect on the confidence of learners in an FE maths classroom and can help overcome the negative emotions and attitudes by taking away the isolation within the classroom. From the 10 ‘peer learning’ methods highlighted by Griffiths, Housten and Lazenbatt, (1995) I this study explores the advantages and disadvantages of using peer learning in the classroom as part of the maths curriculum, using the traditional ‘student tutoring student’ approach. It also investigates the forming of Study Groups within a session to solve problems. This small-scale research, focuses on two classes with a wide range of abilities and attainments. It uses a variety of case studies to bring the report to life and describe events (Bassey:2003) that have happened while trialling peer learning / assessment. The intention is to give the students a voice in the research. Initial findings reveal a powerful outcome that is not often reported, which is the potential to create learning communities in maths resit classes. Lave and Wenger (2002) state that students feel more comfortable and confident ‘were learning is a part of a social practice’ that share ideas, support each other and ultimately have the confidence to approach questions even if their answer may not be fully correct. This study presents a rich account of how using these techniques can help other teachers to overcome the issue of learner isolation in the maths classroom.



Key Words: Maths; peer-learning; confidence; curriculum.

Name: Stuart Wood
Institution: Exeter College

'Crime Against Art'.

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"I write to give myself strength. I write to be the characters that I am not. I write to explore all the things I'm afraid of."

Joss Whedon

The primary aim of this research is to help A level Art students feel excited about and engaged in the theory of their subject and not just the creative side of the subject. Working as an Art teacher within a large FE college in England, my initial research confirmed that A level Art students view themselves as practical learners who embrace the practical element of their course (making drawing, painting, photography and digital manipulation). The dominant view among the students is that theory is something that is difficult, dry and often alien to them.

The primary aim of this research is to help the A-level Art learners feel excited about and engagement in the theory of their subject. Initial research used surveys and case studies to ascertain issues for Art students. There was seen to be a conflict between 'creative' writing and 'academic writing' with students preferring the creative. The next step was to put in place workshops that experimented with the structure of writing and research and made it more attuned to visual creatives by fashioning a 'journal of discovery'. This is something John Berger's, 'Ways of Seeing' (2008) and 'Ways of Representing Research' Elliott (1993) encourages, conveying experience and research through imagery.

Art A-level students need to write a 1500-3000-word research essay. It is important to note that 62% of students felt that this was a 'crime against Art'. Students went through a process of working visually by selecting images of artists work in teams. Then they dictated initial thoughts into their phones. From this they began individually to research deeper into the connections they had made. Only when they had chunk of notes, did we consider what the direction their essay could take. Initial results show A-level art students making greater use of contextual information in their work, opinions expressed in coursework had greater depth of understanding and seeing academic writing less alien and some not to just cut and paste, but to support their creative journey. Some students who were put off the idea of University and the demands of academia have now been encouraged to apply.

Key Words: Academic writing; creative writing; barriers to education; ownership of learning; ways of seeing; ways of representing research and experience.



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<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1blvZ2-jFUZPWnrLXnbCOIO6JgAGqMvYo>

Name: Oliver Cameron-Swan
Institution: Hereford College of Arts

'Observe, Imitate, Modify, Transcend: Encouraging the development of photographic practice to support portfolio career paths for Degree Level Arts students'.

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This study builds upon preliminary findings from a pilot study, conducted on the ETF sponsored Suncett MA short course. These suggest that this research could lead to the generation of a bespoke photographic program, created in collaboration with participating students, tailored to suit individual courses. It extends the original research study to explore in greater depth the ways in which photographic practice can be encouraged/taught as a means to help students 'develop an eye' (Aristotle 384-322 BC) for other forms of practice. Degree Level Arts students have a need to document their creative processes and outcomes. This study approaches photography as a skill that can be used to support and inform the development of creative practices. This research is being conducted with a view to enabling students to generate a resource of media (photographs, videos, etc.) that will help build their creative careers and encourage the development of their own photographic practice throughout those careers. This research is informed by the work of Sennett (2008), in particular his writing on the nature of craft and the processes in which skills are acquired and developed. Of key interest here is Sennett's discussion of the workshop environment in relation to the craftworkers, the importance of observation, repetition and critical dialogue in learning and intelligent action, including the impact of time spent in developing, maintaining adapting, modifying and even transcending a practice. Sennett's work points towards the importance of mindful practice which includes observation, imitation, problem identification, problem solving, and critique. This study is being conducted within a specialist arts college and involves approximately 20 Level 4 students engaged in the Artist's Blacksmithing Degree course. The research involves small-scale, action research interventions set within the inductions offered by photographic technical support staff at the College. These interventions focus on finding the right location and tailoring the context and content of each session to suit the needs of the students. Research methods include qualitative feedback gathered from participants at the end of introductory induction sessions. These are followed by informal discussions at a later date. Coffield's (2008) work on teaching and learning highlights the importance of the student voice within education also informs the methods employed in this research.

Key Words: Curriculum design; ICT; collaboration; media.

Name: Will Cossey
Institution: Exeter College

'Curriculum design for collaboration in the classroom: redesigning space for vocational students in the digital age'.

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In a national context of squeezed budgets in the FAVE sector, this study attempts to find ways to utilise existing classroom spaces and make them more suitable for online and offline collaboration whilst minimising expenditure. The study then looks at how these changes in learning environments, on and offline, impact on students' critical thinking skills and how curriculum design can assist the development of productive collaboration between students.

The research studies the impact of creating a 'collaboration lab' from two existing classrooms, where students from different groups can enhance their dialogic communication skills through working together and sharing knowledge and experience (Sennett, 2012: 82). The research population consists of 80, 16-19 year-old vocational Media students and 8 Lecturers. The project employs Microsoft Teams to help students communicate with each other in order to develop deeper dialogues and further critical engagement with theory. Initial findings indicate students are adept at working online together but reticent about sharing views in an educational setting. The aim, therefore, is to create a curriculum framework and a creative, on and offline space, to help students communicate and improve these critical thinking skills.

Challenging how we use digital technology in the classroom (Turkle, 2015) will be one facet of the study. Secondly the study will track the impact of environmental and curriculum changes through student and staff interviews and measuring student experience data. Thirdly, as a large provider of Arts based courses, we are in a unique position to demonstrate the importance of how the Arts naturally moves beyond teaching to the test, instead providing for a broad, rich curriculum, an aspect of the new Ofsted Inspection Framework.

Lastly, the study looks to investigate how 21st century students cope with huge amount of data that they have access to and how they can become more adept at critically analysing online sources and their accuracy. As Turkle herself points out "learning isn't all about the answers. It's what the answers mean" (2015:8).

Key Words: Curriculum design; collaborative learning; pedagogy; technology; dialogic learning.

Name: Beth Curtis

Institution: Exeter College

'Can we talk about this? Examining the use of dialogic learning to support the integration of theory and practice in A Level Drama'.

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Student engagement with theoretical course content in A Level Drama has historically been problematic. Preliminary findings of this research suggest that students are primarily concerned with the 'practice' aspect of the course and often lack confidence and engagement with the 'theory' elements. This study makes the case for the inclusion of dialogue as a fundamental component within A Level Drama curriculum design. The project describes a two-year action research study in a large FE college in the South West of England, drawing on qualitative data from across 2 cohorts of A Level Drama students. An interleaved curriculum model is used to intersperse Community of Inquiry discussion sessions regularly within the course delivery, investigating if this influences progress in two key areas. The first is student engagement with the theoretical content of the A Level Drama course. The second, critical and collaborative dialogue between students as a scaffold for deeper thinking and more developed writing. Using Lipman's (1988, 1991) Philosophy for Children (P4C) model as a framework, this report tests Higgins' assertion that "discussion skills precede and form the basis for better thinking" (Higgins in Kerslake & Wegerif, 2018:13). Inspired by Dewey's pragmatic epistemology, (Dewey 1916, 1933, 1938) P4C aims to use dialogue alongside a stimulus in order to encourage the development of deep-thinking and critical discourse amongst young people. Applying this model to the A Level Drama curriculum, the thesis is testing if this encourages an increased degree of criticality in student thinking, and subsequently, their talking and writing.

Alexander states that "language and thought are intimately related" (Alexander, 2017:10) This is a central tenet of Vygotskian theory (1978) and this research aims to develop a culture where learners can freely engage in critical dialogue and "become more aware of their own views and expand on their understanding of another" (Sennett, 2013:19). Early indicators suggest that there is a dynamic relationship between talking, thinking and writing in the progress made by A Level Drama students. Analysing student opinion from initial Focus Groups sessions advocates the use of an interleaved curriculum model as one means of bridging the 'theory/practice' divide within the creative arts.

Key Words: Pragmatism; dialogue; Community of Inquiry; curriculum design; theory-practice divide.

Name: Kate Green

Institution: Cambridge Regional College

'Mission impossible? How can tutors support active learner progress through purposeful assessment feedback in post compulsory education?'

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The widely assumed culture in Further Education is that GCSE resit learners can be incredibly reluctant to take control of their own learning and often lack the skills to recognise how important the digestion of assessment and feedback can be to their educational journey. Learners do not often realise the importance of previous attainment or how important reflection on their own practice can be.



In trying to change this mindset, practitioners need to dispel the notion that feedback is an unwanted necessity and promote its role in learning as something that should “improve the student, not just that piece of work” William (2017).

This study aims to explore the concept of functional feedback generated in such a way that it serves to encourage and enable learners to organically reflect on their progress in lessons.

This is a practice focused study which takes place within the course outlines of our current GCSE English Study Programme which provides numerous formative assessment opportunities and in turn opportunities for feedback to improve student learning. Control Groups of 20 full time learners from different vocational areas are monitored over a series of assessment opportunities to ascertain whether a real difference can be made to the quality of their learning by being given more active and direct roles in their assessment feedback.

Qualitative research methods such as 1 to 1 interviews with students and focus groups also serve to determine learner opinions and provide a unique opportunity to share their views on support received and perceived progression made.

An emerging finding is that resit GCSE sessions are often too exam focused commonly ignoring the need for wider more self-reliant learning. The requirement to engage with the question of educational purpose, Biesta (2011) appears to be commonly superseded by the need to achieve a qualification.

Key Words: Feedback; assessment; curriculum; educational purpose.

Name: Linda Hunter
Institution: Sunderland College

'Language is Power. Let's talk about our obsession with written feedback: a study in the paradoxical relationship between written and oral feedback'.

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For most post-16 resit GCSE English students, re-taking a subject in which you have already labelled a 'failure' is a diminishing experience for any human being. It can result in a loss of confidence, not to mention a disengagement and lack of interest in the activity in which you are regarded as being simply 'not good enough'.

Educational reforms to improve levels of learner achievement in GCSE are both welcome and needed but there are increasing imperatives for practitioners to evidence their students' progress with robust and rigorous written feedback to demonstrate learner progress. This research argues that these approaches to assessment practices in GCSE English resits are in danger of locking educational reforms into predictable failure as argued by Sarason (1993).

These imperatives place a huge drain on the time of teaching staff. We need to question how much time the learner spends reading this information, and more importantly, they extent to which they use this feedback to close the gap between their current and potential levels of progress. This study therefore investigates the effectiveness of approaches to formative assessment and learner feedback. It seeks to discover how educational approaches, particularly the work of Clarke (2001) might improve and support deeper levels of learner engagement and achievement. The intention here is to explore the influence of dialogical and written approaches to formative assessment and the development of oracy skills as a feedback tool to support stronger student learner autonomy and self-esteem. The research adopts a practice-based approach and will be based on the experiences of teachers and the quality of students' work. The key focus is on qualitative data as indicators of impact and this is being used to illuminate the experience and to frame the findings of this study. The study is connected to a realistic problem and enduring educational issue faced by front-line practitioners involved in supporting GCSE English resit students. The intention of the research is to build the capacity to teachers to improve their assessment practices and to explore the practical understanding of what we mean by Sennett's (2008) view of quality-driven work in relation to teaching, learning and assessment in the context of English Education.

Key Words: Post-16 GCSE English; resit examinations; assessment; feedback.

Name: Gavin Knox
Institution: Lincoln College

'Fear and loathing in Further Education: evaluating the impact of a coaching culture on teachers' professional development'.

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The widespread use of the term 'coaching' has led to both greater interest in 'coaching in education' alongside conceptual uncertainty about what its purpose. Van Nieuwerburgh (2012) identifies the prerequisites for successful educational coaching: empowerment, liberation, trust, collaboration and shared goals. However, little is known about how coaching models within Further Education (FE) are implemented and their impact upon practice. This study is concerned with evaluating the impact of a coaching model at an FE College where 'coaching' is seen as a key tool for developing teachers' professional learning, and supporting cultural change at strategic and operational levels. The underlying concern for this study, centres around the timing of this when staff morale is low, and funding in FE has been cut to what some would argue are unsustainable levels. The sector continues to face unprecedented levels of mediated state intervention and a continuous 'pelting torrent' of policy initiatives (Coffield, 2017). Findings from this study indicate the FE sector is caught in a culture of performativity in which fear has replaced trust. Ball (2008: 2018) suggests educational workplaces are no longer environments in which teachers can grow and flourish, instead, he believes we have a workforce of fearful and wary teachers. A key question for this study centres around how effective the move to coaching is in developing teachers professional learning in the current context of the FE sector. It takes a systematic approach to evaluate the effectiveness of a coaching model through accounts of experience of 'coaching' at practitioner and management level. Using a qualitative methodology employing phenomenological methods, data is collected from 12 purposively sampled teachers and managers through one to one semi structured interviews. Alongside, establishing what impact, if any, it is having on developing collaborative professionalism at the FE College (Biesta, 2007). Early findings suggest the FE College have recognised that asking managers to 'coach' staff rather than fix their problems, is unexpectedly problematic for many, due in some cases, to the complexity of their roles



The following questions are central to the thesis. Firstly, how does coaching impact on the development of professional learning? Secondly, Can coaching lead to cultural change? Finally, Can coaching lead to better outcomes for learners?

Key Words: Coaching; quality; culture; professionalism.

Name: Enda McBrien
Institution: Activate Learning

'Stand Like a Boxer: In Defence of Vocational Education'.

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"Vocational Education is a great thing.... For other people's children"

Coughlan (2015) [accessed 6/6/19]

This study challenges and explores the existence of a vocational-academic divide. The works of Hyland (2018) and (2019) are used to introduce key issues in the debate. Hyland traces the origins of a vocational-academic divide, back to Ancient Greece and the social class stratifications and political, cultural and power relations which prevailed there and which continue to influence Vocational Education in the UK and elsewhere. It also points to how the acceptance of this false divide has led to the construction of another questionable division ... the division of theory and practice. The research describes how these divides have shaped the history of the development of curriculum theory, curriculum design and assessment practice in programmes of Vocational Education for the Construction Industry in a college of General Further Education (GFE) in England today. The study is based in a large GFE in the south of England, in sites across 3 campuses. The research population for the study includes 27 construction teachers and over 350 construction craft students. It focuses upon students' experiences of Vocational Education, through case studies, interviews and questionnaires. The works of Sennett (2008) and Biesta (2010) are used to draw attention to the dignity of work throughout history. The processes underpinning the acquisition and development of craft from the middle ages to the 21st century are also explored. Issues related to what we mean by 'good work', what we mean by theory and what we mean by practice, are also considered. The works of Hiim (2017) in Finland and Hyland (2017) in the UK bring to the fore how questionable constructions of an academic-vocational division and the separation of theory and practice have shaped curriculum design programmes of vocational education in terms of 'on' and 'off' the job training, which in turn have led to problems of relevance and coherence in students experiences of vocational education. Preliminary findings from this study show how this has led to much discussion of issues of 'employer engagement'. However understandings of what this means and how this engagement can be achieved, vary considerably. It is argued that addressing these issues will require not only a return to what we mean by 'good work', but also our understanding of the nature of a practice, the processes through which a practice improves and the stages through which practice develops.



Key Words: Vocational Education; theory; practice; vocational-academic; divide.

Name: Martin Scott

Institution: Sunderland College

'The good, the bad and the ugly of teaching GCSE Maths: an investigation into team development in an environment of continual change.

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Striving for better numeracy skills to improve the country's economic progression continues to be the focus of political parties of all persuasions in the UK. It is widely accepted that greater numeracy skills will create more positive outcomes in our labour market with greater opportunities in terms of skill level and graduate vacancies (DFE:2012). This study examines how this ambition is practically achieved within GCSE Maths delivery in a General College of Further Educational (GFE). The GCSE Maths qualification covers 52 topics in approximately 30 weeks during an FE revision year, concluding with a completely randomised summative assessment and an average high-grade achievement rate of approximately 20 percent. This is a daunting experience for all concerned, including the organisation, the teacher and the learner. Four key problem areas involved with GCSE Maths delivery are explored. Firstly, the problem of how to attract, retain and develop effective Maths teachers to meet learner needs. Secondly, the problem of purpose, what stands behind the national ambition and anticipated outcome of improved GCSE Maths achievement? Thirdly, the problem of establishing the learners levels of achievement and how do we develop skills attitudes and behaviours towards maths that will support their learning in the future? Finally, the problem of ensuring that teachers understand the GCSE Maths curriculum and qualification, what is involved and how it can be delivered more effectively? This study explores different aspects of these problems through the adoption of a mixed method approach. It provides a unique opportunity to explore how both national and organisational goals are met through GCSE Maths delivery, including the use of technology, Maths Mastery and individualised learning, to enhance learner experience, motivation and skill level. This study builds upon literature from the Department for Education (DFE:2012), alongside the works of key academics including, Boaler (2016), Southall (2017), Barton (2018) and Mattock (2019) to explore these issues in some depth. Learners who receive an effective maths education have more opportunities available to progress in careers, with employers seeking effective skills in finance, technology, data handling and engineering related job roles. A key aim of this study is to identify ways to attract, retain and develop teaching staff members to help them rise to the challenges of delivering GCSE Maths more successfully so that they can in turn improve the lives and life chances of their learners.

Key Words: Maths; Maths Mastery; technology; individualised learning; CPD.

Name: Sophia White
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'An investigation into the efficacy of 'learning by stealth' with Syrian refugees in the ESOL context'.

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This small-scale research study aims to investigate the efficacy of a 'learning by stealth' approach to curriculum development in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teaching, specifically with refugees in the North of England. Refugees are not typical ESOL learners having a very particular set of circumstances to overcome and traditional methods do not always support their learning. This means that their progress can often be slow which in turn makes integration into wider society difficult. Recently arriving refugees from Syria are providing a unique opportunity to research effective models for ESOL teaching. Drawing on the work of Halima Ali in her 2016 report "The Effectiveness of current ESOL courses from the Perspective of Refugee Students" and the Casey Review (2015) of integration within deprived and isolated communities, this research aims to explore how ESOL could be taught through informal or 'stealth' methods. This is where the purpose of the teaching is not specifically focused on ESOL but where language learning occurs in unplanned ways. Early indications suggest that creating contextually rich learning opportunities benefit the learner and facilitate the learning process. It aims to explore and investigate a range of techniques that could be used to enhance meaningful learning experiences. This is timely research as the Integrated Community Action Plan (2019) is seeking to identify how education providers can best work with learners and volunteers to establish how needs can be met successfully in the face of significant funding cuts. This research points to a new way of delivering ESOL teaching that can be used to improve language acquisition and therefore allow better integration into the host society. The research project, includes a minimum of 30 ESOL learners, 3 tutors, 3 organisations and 8 support staff from 4 organisations. In particular it critically considers the influence of current teaching methods, curriculum, learner engagement and learner background upon learning and learner achievement,

Key Words: Curriculum design; ESOL; informal learning; refugees.

Name: Lucy Driver-Williams
Institution: Hereford College of Arts

‘ A Good Education and the Foundation Diploma in Art and Design’.

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This small-scale, practitioner led study seeks to understand what constitutes a good education in the context of a Foundation Diploma in Art and Design.

At a time when qualities implicit in Arts Education such as innovation and creativity are sought after by industry, paradoxically recent policy has been promoting STEM subjects with a reduction of funding to and declining emphasis upon Arts Education. This research investigates the ability of the Diploma to deliver on its potential. This research asks three key questions. Firstly what Arts Education do students need, not just to pass the qualification but also as a spur for their creative journey, through work and life? Secondly, what current education is actually taking place on the Diploma? Finally, How to develop and test a curriculum that strikes an effective balance between the demands of an education in an Arts-based subject and the more general demands of employment in a career beyond Arts Industries. The study was initiated after an informal review comparing student attainment against the grading criteria noted that a lack of explanation of thinking, at times adversely affected the grade awarded. This initial observation is leading consideration the problem in more detail through three theoretical lenses . Research in the field of learning theories and taxonomies of learning is used to explore the varying degrees to which learning takes place in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains in Arts Education. The work of Hyland (2019) is built upon to understand the extent and impact of assumptions about the academic and vocational-divide and its impact upon students prior to, during and after the Foundation course. The work of Biesta (2015) provides a framework against which the educational experience of students on differing Arts pathways as well as those on an A level pathways are mapped. This helpful in considering where the focus lies between the qualification - the knowledge, skills and disposition needed, subjectification- becoming more independent, using own initiative, taking responsibility, and socialisation – becoming part of cultural and political and traditions of the pathway they want to follow. This mixed methods study, includes the analysis of narrative accounts from students. It aims to investigate what can be learnt from and analysis of the experiences of students the Foundation course, whilst continuing to experiment with how to better enact a good education.



Key Words: Arts, education; vocational-academic divide; higher order thinking skills.

Name: Jacklyn Williams
Institution: Training Limited

'Making the best of both worlds: establishing guiding principles for curriculum development that bridges the academic-vocational divide',

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Increasingly referred to in the media for a plethora of reasons including the Hillsborough trial; a SEVERE threat level for international terrorism; and global concerns around computer network attack and cyber espionage; the frequently overlapping vocational areas of *Security and Guarding* and *Crowd Safety Management* have hitherto been largely ignored, in isolation and in combination. The need for education and training equal to the changing and ever-increasing demands being thrust upon them is, however, clear. This study integrates two separate but fundamental themes, namely curriculum design and the academic-vocational, theory-practice, divides. It employs these in order to research how to effectively bridge a gap in provision for training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in these sectors.



Education practitioners, employers and employees alike are expected to exhibit different ways of being in academic and vocational contexts, and different attributions of (or indeed specifically lack of) value existing in their own and others' perceptions of these ways and their associated trappings. Technical education continues to play second fiddle to its academic counterpart. It is seen as a second-class option. Hyland (2014, p. 1) cautions that 'it is unlikely that structural, funding, or curriculum reforms alone will succeed in enhancing VET provision' noting that the 'reconstruction of VET requires a re-orientation of its foundational values ... to have any chance of lasting success'. An inherent challenge is to identify ways to bridge this well-acknowledged and enduring divide to create a set of guiding principles for the development of a generic, joint, degree apprenticeship programme that offers the benefits of practice-informed theory, a basis for CPD, and a professional progression pathway for these sectors. Exploring the balance and distribution of values placed on academic versus vocational knowledge and skills, this research takes a narrative enquiry approach, using semi-structured interviews and focus groups with industry workers (potential apprentices); employers; teachers; and other stakeholders. It seeks to identify commonalities and features that might be applied to overcome the historical academic-vocational divide, asking how can we provide a curriculum that facilitates teachers and learners alike to engage in, and value, the application of theory-informed practice, making the best of both worlds?

Key Words: Academic/vocational divide; curriculum development; theory-practice divide; Vocational Education and Training (VET).

Name: Martell Julia Baines

Institution: Leeds Arts University

'Their Defining moments: Narratives of critical incidents and key influences that prompted progression into post compulsory education in the Arts'

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This study focuses on prevalent inequalities of Access into Post Compulsory Education and Training. It explores how individuals, who may be experiencing multiple factors of disadvantage or under-representation, can surmount barriers to education that can limit their upward social mobility. Opportunities to access, participate and succeed through education into secure employment are widely considered to be solutions. This research

study contends that it is necessary to explore how the home, its location, the health, welfare and financial security of an individual and their family, influence decisions to engage in Arts Education in the Post Compulsory sector. A review of the literature identifies key texts from a number of disciplines including, Education, Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology. Questions of whether education can, or cannot, compensate for society or combat disadvantage in isolation of other agencies interventions are examined. (Bernstein, 1970; Gorard, 2010; Coffield and Williamson, 2011). The key research question informed by the literature subsequently becomes: '*Can widening participation (WP) interventions begin to compensate for society and education?*' The research is set within the context of an Arts institution. The methodology is interpretivist. Methods include story, case study narrative inquiry. Case studies provide rich accounts of students' lived experiences that led them into the Arts. Hermeneutical analysis occurs at several levels; the student's own recalled experiences, the researcher's transcription and analysis of their stories and then the reader's interpretation upon reading the researcher's study. The epistemological position taken is pragmatic and rational, through an interpretation of accounts that aim for authenticity in the context of society, education and the arts. The research population is a small sample of highly engaged students who have contributed active levels of studentship beyond the minimum demands of their course. Their narratives identify participants' 'critical incidents'; a series of personal stories of recalled experiences. Beyond its small-scale, one of the limitations of this study is that it is currently focused on the Arts. However emerging findings suggest that influences upon decisions to participate in education identified in this study may be applicable to other fields of education.



Key Words: Access; critical incidents; widening participation; barriers; progression.

Name: Rachel Bate

Institution: Idea Store Learning Tower Hamlets

'Finding a voice: developing pedagogy for the ESOL classroom'.

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As migrants are increasingly marginalised and subjected to negative portrayals in the media, the ESOL classroom has become a vitally important space for countering powerful discourses and supporting learners in achieving their aspirations. However, mainstream ESOL classes are still dominated by a highly functional curriculum which de-contextualizes language and forms of assessment that do not reflect everyday language use (Cooke and Simpson, 2008). In this context, participatory pedagogies and innovative ideas concerned with multilingualism, Practitionerly translanguaging (Garcia and Kleyn, 2016) have gained popularity within the ESOL teaching community in an effort to develop learners' language skills and critical awareness. There has been limited research in this area and the aim of my project is to explore how a relevant pedagogy can be developed drawing on ideas of translanguaging and a dialogic understanding of communication and identity formation (see Bakhtin, 1981).

This research study is framed by an interpretivist outlook as its principle aim is to interpret the voices and experiences of ESOL teachers and learners. It is essential therefore to adopt an approach in which knowledge claims have a basis in the experiences and understandings of those who inhabit these spaces. Utilising methods from Exploratory Practice allows the study to pursue a collaborative and interpretive approach where learners and teachers work together as co-researchers through classroom based activities (see Hanks, 2017). A wider range of experiences are included through focus groups with other tutors where classroom data is considered further. Findings to date show how other teachers are similarly concerned with hearing the voices of students, beyond the acquisition of curriculum targets and learners have been keen to engage with complex language discussions.

Key Words: Pedagogy; dialogic learning; translanguaging; voice.

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Title: Study Programmes: the policy practice gap.

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This research study explores the gap between the idea or theory of Study Programme and how they are being implemented in practice, across vocational and subject specialist English and maths curricula. Through evaluating the 'technical-rational' perspective of Study Programmes as a solution to the perceived educational problems of a lack of vocational literacy and numeracy success, the aim of this study is to provide a better approach to delivering Study Programmes. A Study Programme is where a student has a combined curriculum of vocational studies, English, Maths, work readiness, and tutorial. Two thirds of FE students on a Study Programme are experiencing exam stress when repeating General Certificate in Secondary Education (GCSE) exams, while improved achievement is only 12%. Embedding Maths and English have been labelled by some as "Curriculum Dumping".



This research study is conducted from an interpretivist methodological standpoint using a mixed methods approach. The ontological perspective adopted in the study is that reality is constructed through interpretation and narrative. By interrogating narratives from a wide variety of cultural contexts and personal perspectives, including those staff, students and managers, it is hoped that it may be possible to gain insights into the structures and practices at work in the college which forms the site of this research in relation to the implementation of Study Programmes and how the current curriculum approach might be refocussed through the lens of Joint Practice Development (JPD) (Fielding et al 2005) to accommodate more process based approaches to curriculum development. It is also important to acknowledge the epistemological assumption underpinning this methodology is that shared knowledge can allow practice to form and be reformed in order to guide future positive development and more intelligent action. The overall aim of the study is to improve teaching, learning and achievement in relation to Study Programme for students so that good policy and curriculum intentions can be realised in practice

Key Words: Curriculum; Study Programmes; technical-rational world views; Joint Practice Development.

Name: Joy Evans

Institution: Activate Learning

'Is 'stretch and challenge' the missing ingredient in the recipe for a good further education or is it a stretch too far?'

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The concept of providing students with opportunities to maximise their learning is an integral aspect of educational pedagogy (Hayes, 2015). Whilst there is a drive to implement 'stretch and challenge' in teaching and learning initiated by Ofsted (2013), there is a lack of clarity amongst practitioners in further education about what 'stretch' is, what 'challenge' means and how to use both in pedagogically sound ways. This study provides an update on a small-scale practitioner action research study (McNiff 2014) about the impact of planning for and implementing 'stretch and challenge' on Level 3 vocational study. The research is underpinned by constructivist phenomenology and situated within tensions of neoliberal performativity (Ball, 2017). It also considers the issue of what we mean by 'good' education. (Biesta, 2015). A review of the literature paints a picture of 'stretch and challenge', taking three formats: the setting of targets to enhance individual learning growth over time (Education and Training Foundation 2014); widening a learner's skills in critical thinking (Gershon, 2015); and teaching strategies for stretch and challenge as a means of improving the learner experience and achievement (Hattie, 2012). Findings from Focus Groups and interviews suggest that all three approaches to 'stretch and challenge' are prevalent and that there is a wide variety of interpretations about the implementation of 'stretch and challenge' on a learning programme. Four teachers carried out practitioner action research during 2018-19 academic year. They selected the nature of 'stretch and challenge' research focus, identified the specific strategies adopted during their teaching, reflected and modified their approaches during the research period. Findings suggest that Individual stretch targets linked to future career aspirations co-created by the learner and the teacher make the contents of the course have relevance and motivated students to take risks in learning. They also indicate that widening skills in critical thinking developed curiosity around current events and how they relate to the business world and the theory being learned during the course. Finally they point to how teaching strategies which stretched and challenged learners such as developing team working skills and academic writing developed communication and independent thinking skills in important ways.

Key Words: Stretch and Challenge; action research; whole organisation development.

Name: David Galloway

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Standing on the shoulders of giants - the 'Teacher's Takeaway' case study - An exploration into the possibilities to effectively share 'good practice' over the internet in a bid to save time and improve the development of craft-

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Time is a significant resource that teachers constantly identify as being in short supply. With the ever-increasing demands on teachers workloads, the time and opportunity to engage in meaningful CPD can be seen by many as unrealistic. Sennett (2008) highlights that doing a job takes time and in doing our own work well can enable us to 'imagine larger categories of good'. Although Sennet also points out the reality that the current economic situation works

against the concept of long term job tenure. The pace to find a 'quick solution' can come at the expense of reflection and the reduction of skill refinement, where through repetition and modification processes skill can become ingrained in practice (Sennett 2008). This research aims to evaluate the impact of the 'Teacher's Takeaway', a video-based social media platform, for CPD which aimed to create opportunities where teachers could share and develop 'good' practice. Key research questions include, Does the Teacher's Takeaway work to encourage collaboration where the teachers can illustrate their journey of skill development? Is it this intervention just a quick fix solution to a much deeper and complex problem? The comparisons and contradictions of data in this thesis are explored from a combination of 'quan + QUAL' (Biesta, in Coe et al 2017). The quantitative data sets are included to support critical analysis with the strong focus of the value of Qualitative data. Quantitative findings are showing varied levels of engagement of the Teacher's Takeaway, which was launched in September 2017. Google analytics show over 3,900 visitors with a bounce rate (the percentage of visitors only viewing one page) of 31%. The site has 2% of visitors sign up to be able to comment and engage with the social forum. Interviews are conducted using a semi-structured approach to provide opportunities to probe and expand on the interviewees responses. Emerging themes highlight a trend for users to interact with resources that feature colleagues with whom they have previously developed rapport. Suggestions are offered to improve the platform's functionality. Insights are also offered into the barriers restricting individuals to engage as creators of content for the site.



Key Words: Staff Development; technology; collaboration; practice; craft.

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'Putting Practice First: teacher-led professional development in action'.

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This study questions the extent to which evaluation of teaching and learning by Ofsted brings about changes in the performance of individuals and improved student achievement rates. It also explores how and why experiences of Ofsted can be viewed quite negatively by staff, managers and education leaders, “Those in power already know, for instance, that the inspection system, for all its positive features, is flawed, dysfunctional and damaging ...”, (Coffield, 2017, p.69). The role of Ofsted and the Inspection Framework are analysed and how they impact upon educational establishments. The impetus for this research emerged from a full inspection by the Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) in January 2017 which awarded the College, which forms the focus of this study, a Grade 3, ‘Requires Improvement ‘ (RI), in all areas, except Apprenticeships. It presents the findings of an enquiry into approaches to collaborative Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and its use in generating improvements in educational practice in a college of Further Education (FE) in England. The study investigates, examines and compares the methods of staff development used by the College with those employed by two similar colleges, who have both been awarded a higher grading from Ofsted inspections. It considers if/how these methods could be implemented by the FE College in question. The methodology is interpretive, working in a small-scale. Methods include structured and non structured interviews to gather data about people’s experience of inspection, performance improvement methods and their ideas and evidence about what works and what does not. The study explores how Joint Practice Development (JPD) (Fielding et al, 2005) might be used as a different approach to CPD. Findings show that involvement in the principles and practices JPD makes teachers feel valued, encourages them to take ownership of their development and work in collaboration with their peers and the management team. Emerging findings also indicate that using ungraded teaching observations, with feedback in the form of professional discussions resulting in jointly agreed actions, are more likely to inspire teachers to develop their practice and experiment with their teaching than the previous system.

Key Words: Continuing Professional Development; Ofsted; staff development; educational practice.

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'Using Joint Practice Development as a model of collaborative enquiry for engaging further education (FE) college lecturers in professional learning'

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This small-scale research study investigates the impact of using a Joint Practice Development (JPD) model to engage FE college lecturers in collaborative professional learning. The rationale for this research originates from my own reflections on the experience of professional development engagement with lecturers. Further Education (FE) colleges in the UK are in a constant changing landscape to meet 'urgent' priorities from government initiatives, educational foci, skills needs of employers and industrial policy changes.

Teachers' professional development and learning is very often driven by these wider priorities which do not always meet the local needs of teachers. Inspired by the work of Fielding et al. (2005) and Hargreaves (2012) and recommendations by Coffield (2017), the JPD model is explored as a teacher-centred form of staff development to be examined in this thesis. According to Coffield (2017), JPD 'is proving to be a major advance in professional learning over teachers "sharing practice", which may not change what they do in classrooms; instead they jointly (J) evaluate their practice (P) in order to develop it (D)' (ibid, 2017, p.39). This research study employs an interpretivist methodology. It aims to represent a holistic view of human beings who are able to construct and reconstruct meaning through social interactions (Scott and Usher, 2017). Through narrative inquiry-based research method (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990), interviews, a research diary and case studies are used to record and interpret the experiences of teachers working collaboratively and reflecting together to develop and enhance aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. The analysis of narratives provides the empirical data for evaluation of the impact from the use of the JPD model contextualised by Gregson et al., 2013. Emerging findings include evidence of improvement in staff morale and motivation in engaging with professional development. Colleagues feel that they are more supported, with mutual respect and are able to discuss ideas and explore strategies together without feeling obliged to do so. However, sustaining this trusting relationship is delicate and it requires more time and support from the wider community to consolidate the use of JPD model as an approach to staff development.

Key Words: Professional learning; CPD; Joint Practice Development (JPD).



Name: Helen Irish

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'Can Learning Beyond the Classroom Improve Retention and Inclusion?'

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Since the reduction in funding for English as a Second Language (ESOL) in 2010, there have been several reports, (The Casey Review, 2016, Integration, Not Demonisation', APPG, 2017) highlighting the need for second language learners to improve their English skills to be able to integrate into society and feel less isolated. Reductions in guided learning hours (GLH) following the changes have led to teachers finding alternative ways to close the gap created by these reductions. The central question of this research study is whether using technology outside the classroom can be used to generate pedagogically sound experiences. The focus of this study is on learners: their ability to develop their English and social skills with the support of their peers and technology and to extend this beyond the classroom. A Community of Practice (Lipman, 1993) is used to combine technology and education to create an environment in which learners share resources, problems and solutions both in the classroom and outside the classroom is a major element of this research study. 'A Virtual Community of Practice (CoP) is a network of individuals who share a domain of interest about which they communicate online. The practitioners share resources... Such communication results in the improvement of the knowledge of each participant in the community and contributes to the development of the knowledge within the domain. (Gannon-Leary & Fontainha, 2007, p.2). The approach taken in this research study is a hermeneutic / interpretivist approach because it creates a greater understanding of the learners. The research takes a narrative perspective to identify the personal experiences of learners through interviews and case studies: 'In both spoken and written narratives, you can hear or read the meaning building up. It is not just a description. The account moves across time and accretes meaning as it goes' (Squire, 2015, p.6). It provides a personal view of the effect attending ESOL classes has had on their educational and personal lives and the role technology has played. Preliminary findings identified include improved confidence, the ability to progress onto other courses and getting the job they wanted but could not get before attending class.



Key Words: ESOL; Community of Practice; technology; inclusion.

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'Beyond Individual Learning Plan - exploring goal methodology with adult learners'

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The ability to direct learning independently of the teacher and outside of the classroom is considered essential to successful language learning. This is particularly important for migrant ESOL learners in the UK. It is a sad irony that these learners, despite living in an English speaking country, far from being immersed in the language, often find themselves isolated from a wider linguistic community and have very few opportunities to use or practise their language skills. This study, which takes place in community settings in west London, builds on the research by Locke and Latham (2002), Oettingen (2014) and Golwitzer (e.g. 2011). It investigates strategies that can help learners develop the ability to self-direct their learning of English outside of the classroom. In particular it looks at the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) and the goal setting methodology underlying this document. It seeks to establish if the ILP can be re-engineered and 'de-institutionalised' to foster learner autonomy and promote out-of-classroom learning. Specifically, learners are asked to keep a goal diary where they themselves write and review their course and weekly goals. The goal setting and the review of progress is shared in the classroom. The research study is placed within the interpretivist paradigm which argues that direct observation is not the only way of knowing about the world and allows us to delve deeper into the object of our inquiry and gain a more profound understanding of it. Where Positivism concerns itself with large datasets in pursuit of statistical significance, interpretivism endeavours to understand the subjective world of the human experience. Due to its unique context the study also employs action research methodology which in addition to bridging the doing (practice), learning (study), and reflection (inquiry). This enables the research to be conducted in an ongoing, systematic and recursive way. Surveys, questionnaires and interviews are used to collect predominantly qualitative data. Preliminary results show that keeping a goals diary and setting weekly goals leads to an increase in language use outside of the classroom, an increase in confidence, greater autonomy and improved language skills.



Key Words: Goals; goal-setting; ESOL; Individual Learning Plan (ILP); teaching; learning; action research.

Name:Gordon Duffy-McGhie
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Title: Educating the educators: vocational teachers' experiences implementing technical education reform through enhanced Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

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Recent reforms to Technical Education seek to enhance learners' study through the introduction of Technical (T) level qualifications (Sainsbury Review, 2016). Designed to 'raise standards', T levels aim to offer learners a more demanding qualification, one focused on the acquisition of core English, mathematics and digital skills alongside the development of technical expertise. To achieve this aim, technical teachers and trainers will need to develop alternative pedagogical approaches in order to successfully embed these 'core' skills within their practice. This research study explores the design and delivery of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities which focus on improving learners' literacy through engagement with digital technology. It challenges the view that teachers are primarily and solely *vocational specialists*, and suggests that, by exploring alternative CPD models, and embracing a new 'literacy paradigm' (Didau, 2014), we are better able to enable technical teachers to deliver *behavioural change* alongside traditional vocational skills sets, and thereby breakdown longstanding perceptions of an academic-vocational divide (Hyland, 2017). Three teachers, and sixty students - all studying different Technical Vocational courses - are participating in experiments designed to initiate research-based change. In phase one, we surveyed each group to establish current levels of literacy by qualitatively measuring the *complexity* and *frequency* of the literacy skills to which learners were most exposed. In addition, each survey measured learners' *confidence* in the ability to use complex skills within changing vocational contexts. Data collected are compared to end-of-project survey results and the analysis forms a major part of the research evaluation and final recommendations. To date, the research has positively impacted upon CPD activities in the site of the study where three supported experiments, initiated during phase one, directly involved over five hundred teachers in the creation and sharing of more than one hundred videos exploring alternative digital strategies for developing learners' literacy in vocational settings. By adopting a *Practitioner-based research* approach (Nutley, 2013), the project aims to ensure that teachers drive changes to practice, and that future research is carried out *with* and *for* them, and not *on* them (William, 2018).



Key Words: Technical Education reform; English; Mathematics; Digital Skills; academic-vocational divide; supported experiments.

Name: Frances Norton

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'Deflecting risk, increasing citizenship: JPD Debate Club at two FE colleges, exploring the potential impact of critical thinking strategies'.

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This is a study in Joint Practice Development (JPD) (Fielding et al (2005) in the field of Critical Thinking (CT). It is situated in two FE Colleges in the North of England. Vocational students at FE colleges often demonstrate low levels of literacy and diminished self-confidence. (Burke 2001) states that a Neoliberal education agenda has caused a 'literacy crisis'. Many vocational students are resistant to literacy strategies preferring practical engagement. This study explores how literacy proficiency, increased citizenship, community, mental health and well-being might be improved via pedagogical interventions in CT. In particular, this research takes the position that introducing participants to philosophical debate may deflect issues (Beck, 2013) that polarize society. For example, the rise in fake news, far-Right extremists and the demonisation of immigration. By discussing these concerns, in CT interventions including Lipman's (2003) Community of Enquiry and a Debate Club, the study identifies how students develop skills in CT and citizenship by listening to each others' stories and sharing ideas. The small-scale study explores the extent to which CT interventions which begin in oracy can impact on the development of literacy. The research population consists of 34 volunteers, meeting over five weeks. Emerging findings suggest that CT interventions can help students, lecturers, technicians and support staff find voice as they find connection. Tentative findings show that CT interventions, increase engagement and enjoyment in sessions, develop students' motivation to write and improve levels of literacy. Emerging findings indicate that the Debate Club creates a safe space and a non-judgemental arena for points of view. Data from the study supports the claim that these CT interventions contribute to the development of a social conscience, a moral compass, and an increased sense of internalised citizenship. Early findings also point to how participation in these CT interventions encourages a culture in which students can be decent, kind, caring, considerate and creative, towards each others' ideas and each other, making them more aware of their own individual contributions and of their contributions to the community as a whole.



Key Words: Critical thinking; citizenship; Community of Enquiry; oracy; literacy; Art.

Name: Sarah Peters

Institution: Hull College

**'Read like a butterfly, write like a bee - Discuss!:
investigating the potential of an integrated
circles pedagogy for the development of English
language skills and shared understandings in an
ESOL context'**

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This research study builds on two previous ETF Practitioner Research Programmes for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). The first considered reading circles (Furr, 2009). The second focused on writing circles (Gunnery, 2007). These projects were conducted in response to declining exam rates at the institution in an era of narrowing curriculum (Hamilton & Hillier, 2009). Circles involve small groups of students meeting weekly to discuss and build their understanding of a particular text or piece of work using allocated, rotating roles. The roles provide a structure for collaborative language tasks. Both previous projects appeared to indicate that dialogue played a significant role in language learning and in learning about experiences of the wider world. This prompted the research question: what is the role of oracy in Circles? In this third project, two cohorts of adult Entry 3 ESOL students completed a trial to investigate if circle activities can be integrated, and what the outcomes might be. An action research method (McNiff, 2014) is used as an iterative way to investigate this particular F.E. workplace issue. The use of narrative accounts (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990) aims to represent participant experience, whilst quantitative data indicates assessment results.

An emerging finding of the Circle effect is the formation of democratic and participatory classroom 'Communities of Enquiry' (Lipman, 2003) in which learners generate, share and reflect on personal connections, opinions, questions and answers raised by texts or tasks, by themselves and peers. This is revealing how learners might pool literacy knowledge, life experiences and individual perspectives at word, sentence, text and cross-cultural levels via conversation. The role of conversation is being investigated within dialogic teaching and learning (Alexander, 2017) alongside critical dimensions (Burbules, 2007; Sennett, 2018) where the idea of dialogue itself can be challenged. Underlying themes of relationship-building and voice in ESOL are emerging, with the tentative suggestion that Circles may provide space for the marginalised to be heard. Assessments to date show a small rise in learner self-confidence and achievement of language sub-skills. However, Circle work is a long-term process requiring adequate time and resources in order for ESOL learners to advance.

Key Words: ESOL; reading circles; writing circles; community of enquiry; English language skills; dialogue.

Name: Graham Pitchforth
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'Back to the Future, Forward to the Past
Exploring the importance of craftsmanship in the
development and delivery of digital education'.

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The landscape of General Further Education (GFE) has changed considerably over time, with digital technology amongst other factors being a driver of this change. GFE practitioners are being faced with ever increasing workloads, class sizes and teaching commitments. The demands of current workloads are restricting practitioner's ability to reflect, share and develop the craft of teaching practice and pedagogy. This research study aims to address why after years of sector investment in digital education a large proportion of teaching practitioners, are not yet able to use digital technology to improve their educational practice. The reasons behind this practitioner digital 'stagnation' are explored and contextualised in this study. The term "digital literacy" coined by (Glister, 1997) has long been bandied about as if the term is well understood by everyone. One of the main aims of this research study is to ask if digital pedagogy should really be the centre of our attention, as opposed to digital literacy? After all, the purpose and intent of technology in education, should of course be to enhance the educational experiences of students and not just to keep up with current political agendas or Ofsted imperatives. Data from research participants in this study suggest that there is a need for subject specific, meaningful digital CPD that is relevant to them and their students' development. The work of Sennett (2008), Dewey (2012) and Kolb (2015) underpin the literature and theoretical frameworks used in support of this study. This body of work creates a strong warrant to support the idea that the development of craft requires community, interaction, inquiry, the opportunity to make mistakes, investment of the time and real-world experience with the chosen subject area. The settings in which this study take place have a firm focus on the use of technology. However, there was a distinct lack of focus on digital pedagogy, including an understanding of the nature of practice and the processes involved in the development of craft. This research points to dangers in failing to apply tried and tested teaching practices and understandings of skill and craft development in contexts where teachers are asked to use digital technology for educational purposes.



Key Words: Digital; technology; literacy; skill; craft; pedagogy.

Name: Ruth Richardson
Institution: HOW College

'The value and impact of informal learning on the professional development of teachers'.

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There is concern amongst Further Education (FE) teachers about the future of the sector due to the current funding cuts associated with austerity policies. Continuing professional development is important for those working in the FE sector, particularly given the changing shape of workplaces and FE itself, but lack of funding can lead to difficulties in finding space and time for it. It is therefore important to look at alternative ways of encouraging professional development to our teachers. Research literature, both related to education and the corporate world consider informal learning to be effective and consequently an important part of the developmental process, so is it time to consider informal learning as a possible solution and test the theory that “..... informal learning is not an optional extra but one of the main factors that shapes what kind of human being you become.” (Coffield, 2009, p.25). Informal learning is classified as the unofficial, unscheduled impromptu way people learn to do their jobs and this generally takes place without much facilitation or structure. It tends to occur whenever people have the need, motivation and opportunity to learn. This research focuses on establishing the value and impact of informal learning on teacher’s professional development by introducing and evaluating informal learning opportunities for practitioners and exploring the contextual factors influencing the ability to learn well enough to implement the desired solution. Evidence is gained primarily through their stories of experience and is influenced by an interpretivist research methodology. Preliminary findings concur with the literature and demonstrate that in order to engage in informal learning learners need time, support and recognition and to make it effective there needs to be an element of critical reflection and some proactivity on the part of the learner to learn (Marsick and Watkins, 1990).



Key Words: Professional Development; informal learning; workplace learning.

Name: James Tarling
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“See you on the other side.” Reimagining the vocational curriculum with flow psychology: what is the student experience of the TAPOUT curriculum model and how do they perceive the most important characteristics that nurture flow?

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‘Flow is being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz.’

Csikszentmihlay, (2002)

“If every unit was like this you’d get higher marks”

Level 5 Music Student

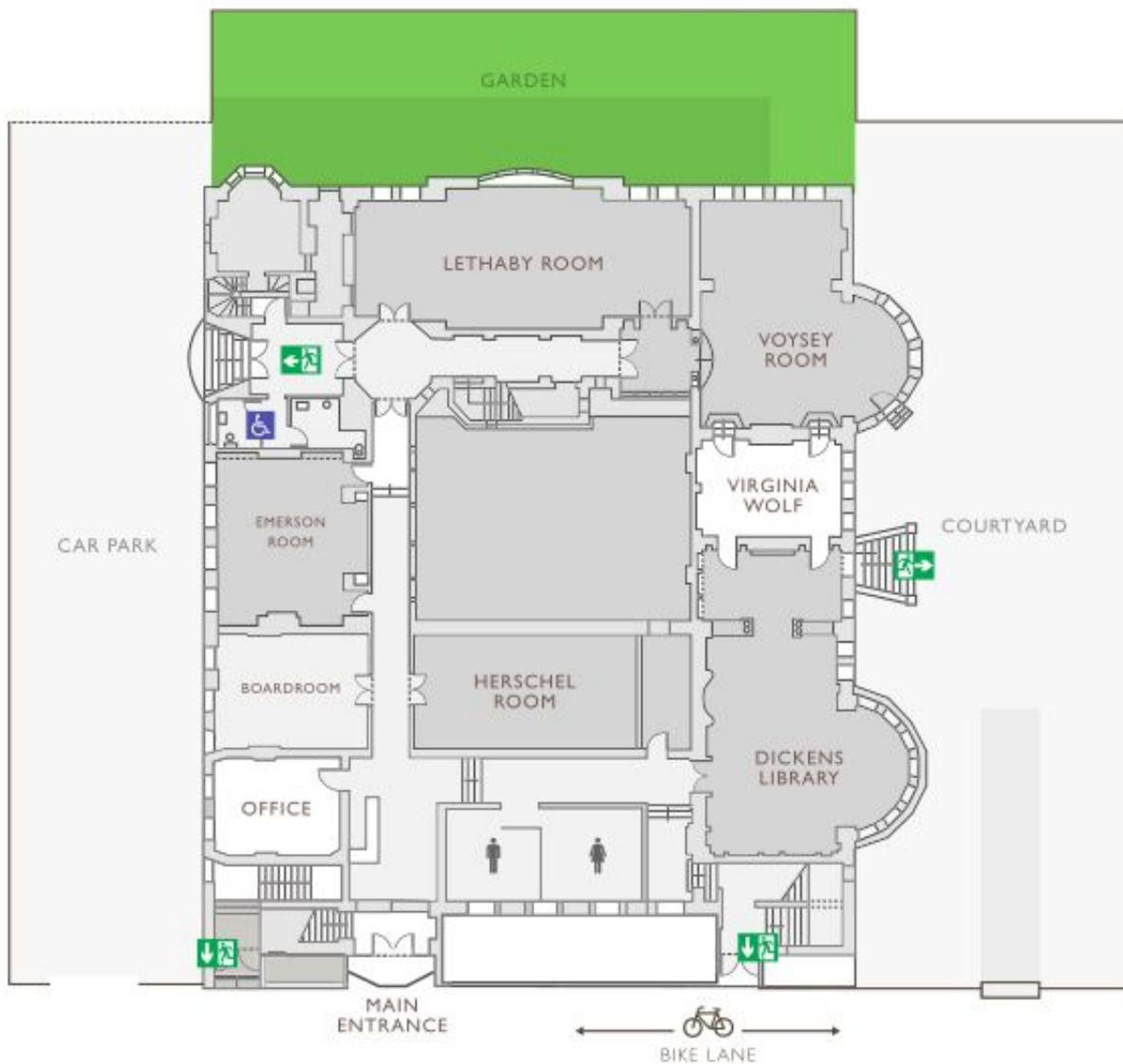


This study seeks to explore how curricula may be re-imagined to include elements of flow psychology and real-world project work to provide young people with ‘powerful knowledge’ (Young, 2012) that aids employability and progression whilst addressing problems of student commitment and well-being. Preliminary findings indicate that when the curriculum is orientated in this way, students are more likely to engage, achieve and carry on achieving at university. Feeding into discussions around, curriculum reform, T Levels, social justice and educational leadership, this study would be of interest to system leaders and teachers who wish to engage their students more deeply and consider practical ideas for curriculum renewal to help their learners achieve more ‘flow’ and personal success. Across the study so far, students have reported: 85% ‘loss of anxiety’. 70% reported a ‘lack of fear of failure’, 100% improved levels of creativity and 100% of students felt that the process had helped them to learn whilst improving their performance overall. An emerging theme of the research is the way in which these experiences engender, ‘healthy learning’ by providing opportunities that have the potential to increase student engagement and promote personal wellbeing. The focus on insight and improvement drives this interpretivist approach to practitioner research. It can be said to offer a lens through which to study educational practice that is ‘problem focused, context specific and future orientated’ (Hart and Bond, 1995). The aim is to produce a ‘warranted’ and ‘relatable’ account (Elliott and Lukeš, 2008) of practice that will be of use to other educators seeking to reimagine their curricula.

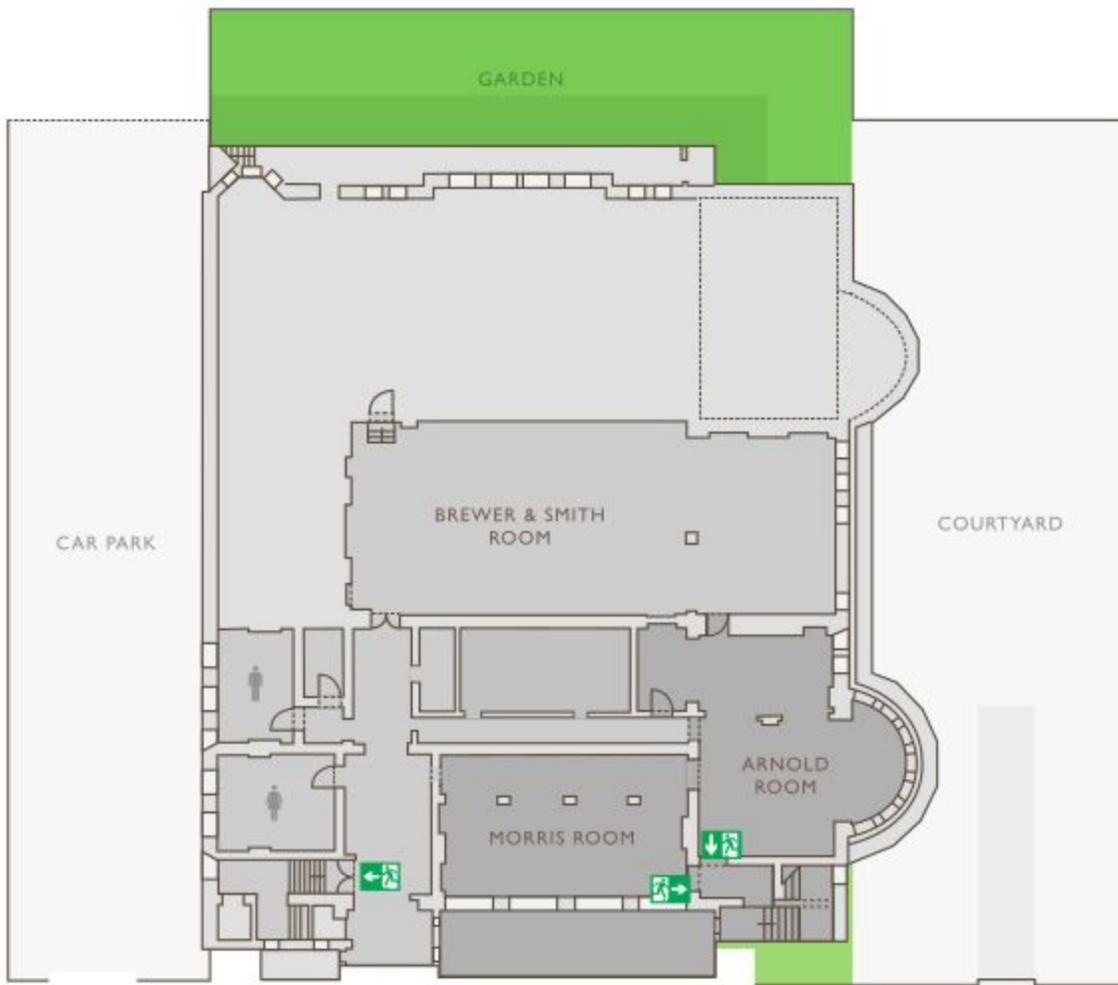
Drawing on Stenhouse’s (1975) concept of the Process Curriculum, Hyland’s (2017) challenge to the ‘The traditional dualities of theory and practice’ and Csikszentmihlay’s (2002) notion of ‘optimal experience’, the TAPOUT curriculum framework is an attempt to apply these theories to workable classroom contexts.

KEY Words: Flow psychology; vocational learning; curriculum studies; well-being.

Mary Ward House Ground Floor Plan



Lower Ground Floor



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