



School of Education

LEARNING STRANDS

ISSUE 2 AUTUMN 2019

Welcome

to the second School of Education newsletter. A new academic year with all of its promise is upon us.

There is always a welcome buzz when large numbers of students return to campus or start afresh on their studies. The MacRobert Café fills with people and the sound of conversation enlivens this social space. Nights out are planned; timetables deciphered; and lectures digested.

Whatever these students' focus, be it Counselling, Early Years education, Initial Teacher Education, Educational Research, or in-practice Professional Learning - one thing unites: as future graduates of the School of Education at the University of Aberdeen, all will be responsible for playing their role in (re)imagining our collective future. What kind of society do we want to be? How will we live with others at home and overseas, especially when we see things differently?

How will we respond to the clarion call of youth personified, for example, in Greta Thunberg? What of the challenge posed by popular movements, such as Extinction Rebellion? Do we stand in solidarity with the Head Teacher of Anderton Park Primary School, Birmingham, Sarah Hewitt-Clarkson? Where do we stand and why?

As communities face an uncertain future, at home and overseas, the importance of socially-engaged education, and socially-engaged Schools of Education, has never been clearer. Throughout their studies, students are given the essential privilege of thinking space as they are provoked and nurtured to develop as socially-engaged



practitioners in a vibrant interdisciplinary school and university environment.

Collaboration continues to be key as we look to the future: as a School of Education and as learning communities near and afar. I am delighted that we are about to launch a new collaborative Learning Hub with the Northern Alliance in the School of Education's MacRobert Building (See P. 5). This builds upon partnership work which saw the reimagining of our newly accredited General Teaching Council for Scotland initial teacher education programmes (See P. 4).

Other new partnership work seeks to innovatively address teacher shortages (See PP.4, 5). Our school community continues to be enriched by our international students, as we look outwards in the service of others (See PP.2-3).

Wherever in the world this newsletter finds you, all good wishes from the staff and students of Aberdeen's School of Education.

Dr David Smith
Head of School of Education

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This newsletter was created by the School Communications Team. We would like to extend our thanks to all our contributors.

If you would like to contribute to our next issue or have any questions please contact Lucy MacDonald,
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THE SUNDAY TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES
**GOOD
UNIVERSITY
GUIDE
2019**

**SCOTTISH
UNIVERSITY
OF THE YEAR**

Cambodia Project



Educational Inclusion in Samlout and Rukhak Kiri, Cambodia

Dr Jackie Ravet and Dr Peter Mtika

Cambodia is a low income country in South East Asia with a population of 16 million people, 79% of whom live in rural areas. The economy is based on agriculture, mainly rice production. Under the Pol Pot regime (1975-79), education was decimated in Cambodia as children were put to hard labour in the rice fields and large sections of the educated class, including teachers, were killed. Since then, the education system has been slowly re-established, but largely in urban areas, resulting in significant inequalities.

Though schooling is now compulsory, only 50% of children in rural Cambodia have access to education. The primary schools that do exist often run in makeshift buildings with no electricity or clean water, poorly qualified teachers and no resources. As a result, literacy rates are very low amongst children aged 6-11 years. In addition, there is significant stigma around disability in Cambodia, children with disabilities living in rural areas face considerable challenges accessing education, and suffer isolation, marginalisation and discrimination. Culturally, educational expectations for girls are more limited than those for boys, and children from religious minorities, e.g. Muslim children, are widely excluded.

However, KHEN, an education NGO based in Battambang, Cambodia, is currently working to address these challenges by building schools and introducing inclusive education in remote, rural areas of north-west Cambodia. Since 2014, KHEN has built or refurbished over 40 schools in the Samlout and Rukhak Kiri districts of Battambang Province, providing primary education for over 9,000 children who previously would not have attended school at all.

This increase in school provision by an NGO is unprecedented and has been highly beneficial to local communities. However, KHEN are aware that, though large numbers of children now have more opportunities to access school, they cannot always be effectively included in learning in the classroom. This is because their headteachers and teachers lack training in inclusive education, leading to problems with the quality of educational provision. This is a common problem in Cambodia, in both rural and urban schools.

In order to address this problem, KHEN approached Dr Jackie Ravet and Dr Peter Mtika from the School of Education for support in building capacity in inclusive practice in rural schools. Dr Rany Sam and Dr Ratha Seng at the University

of Battambang (UBB) were also invited to collaborate. A research team was thus established and a two-week Scoping Study was organised in Battambang from 19 October to 1 November 2018.

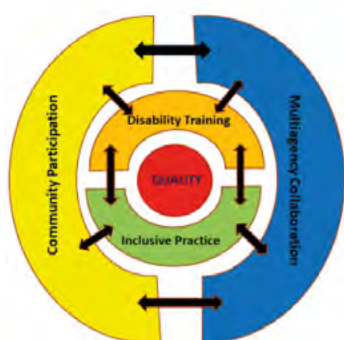
The assessment of Needs and Capacity Building are closely aligned to the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG): **Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all**. The team explored the way headteachers and teachers perceive inclusive education in remote rural schools to discover what support they need to improve the quality of inclusion. A capacity building programme to enhance inclusive education will be built on the findings of the needs assessment.

The findings of the Scoping Study suggest that teaching and learning in remote, rural schools is highly teacher-centred and traditional. Headteachers and teachers indicated that lack of training, lack of resourcing, absenteeism linked to geography and seasonality (e.g. lack of transport in the rainy season), and cultural attitudes amongst the local community (e.g. that disabled children cannot learn) are key barriers to inclusion. Beyond this, there are significant economic barriers.

Headteachers and teachers suggested that what they need, above all, is training in inclusion and disability so that they can enhance the quality of inclusion in the classroom. Unfortunately, this expertise is not available at teacher education level at Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC). It is therefore tentatively proposed that staff in the School of Education at the University of Aberdeen might draw on their expertise to work with partners in Cambodia to develop a collaborative capacity-building programme.

However, inclusion in the West has evolved, over time, in step with the evolution of education from a teacher-centred to a child-centred model, and from a focus on inclusion as access to a focus on inclusion as participation. At the same time, socio-cultural and political shifts in Western perceptions of social justice have largely been in sympathy with this evolution. Inclusion in the west is therefore associated with a very different concept of education, in a very different cultural context, to that observed in the rural Cambodian school.

This raises important questions, such as what would inclusion in a more traditional Cambodian educational context look like, and who decides? Are western orthodoxies relevant to the Cambodian educational content and is such an influence desirable? These questions raise important issues for the research team who therefore propose that raising the quality of educational inclusion in rural schools in Samlout and Rukhak Kiri has four necessary dimensions, as seen in the diagram.



Raising the Quality of Educational Inclusion: 4 Dimensions

At the heart of this model lies the word 'quality'. Simply put, the challenge facing the team is to enhance the quality of education in remote, rural schools by supporting headteachers and teachers to progress from a focus on the access of children with disabilities, to a broader and deeper focus on the participation of all children in learning in the classroom, including those with disabilities.

In order to achieve this, the research findings have suggested that practitioners need training in inclusion and a better understanding of disability. However, it has become obvious that this training cannot simply be imposed. Neither can it be based purely on imported, 'western orthodoxies'. Rather, it must be carefully adapted to fit the Cambodian socio-economic, cultural and educational context.

This might best be achieved by collaborating closely with two further groups: Multiagency Collaboration (i.e. collaboration with BTEC, relevant Cambodian government organisations in the education and health sectors and other NGOs in the area) and Community Participation (i.e. collaboration with community chiefs, families, parent groups and children's groups in Samlout and Rukhak Kiri).

Jackie and Peter have recently secured additional funding to bring their Cambodian research partners over to the School of Education for a series of collaborative meetings to be held over one week in October 2019.

The aim of the visit will be to discuss the Scoping Study findings, explore global perspectives on educational inclusion, visit local inclusive schools in Aberdeen, and develop a draft capacity building programme and framework that is context sensitive, practical, relevant and sustainable.

It is tentatively envisaged that capacity building might begin at teacher education level focusing on staff at Battambang Teacher Education College (BTEC). This could then lead to the development of an in-service programme on inclusion for headteachers and teachers delivered by the newly trained BTEC staff. This would ensure that capacity-building is embedded in teacher education, safeguarding sustainability. However, this preliminary proposal must be scrutinised in detail during the visit.

After the visit, the Cambodian members of the research team will share the draft capacity building programme with multiagency and community partners in the region. In doing so, wider collaborations and networks will be established and modifications to the capacity building project will be incorporated into the draft. In this way, it is hoped that the context sensitivity, practicality and relevance of the capacity building programme will be refined and enhanced.

For more information on KHEN visit www.khencambodia.org



Re-visioning Initial Teacher Education

Five Initial Teacher Education Programmes accredited by the General Teaching Council for Scotland

Our Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes at Aberdeen aim to support student teachers as they embark on their professional journey of becoming a **critically responsive, reflective practitioner** who facilitates the learning of children and young people.

Our four-year undergraduate programme in Primary Teaching, MA (Hons), as well as PGDE Primary and Secondary programmes (full-time and part-time DLITE), has been successfully accredited again by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS).

Our re-structured programmes continue to provide high quality, 'fit for purpose' student experiences which are innovative and enquiry-based to prepare students for the first phase of their professional lives. We continue to deliver academic excellence as well as enabling our students to achieve a professional qualification by meeting the Standard for Provisional Registration with GTCS and enter their induction year with confidence.

We will provide a flexible approach to the education of trainee teachers in order to meet the developing educational needs of pupils for the 21st Century. With collaborative learning (on-campus and online) and a commitment to providing opportunities for breadth and depth, all students can develop academically and the skills, competences, knowledge

and attitudes necessary for successful entry into the teaching profession. We work in partnership with schools across a number of Local Authorities.

We will enhance the student experience through providing a range of opportunities for learning underpinned by the following principles: Developing skills for critical self-evaluation; Providing student choice and flexibility; Encouraging collaborative working; Understanding the value of engaging in professional enquiry; Enabling shared understandings through support and challenge; Using a research base to inform professional learning.

Key pedagogical features of our new programmes include:

- > Innovative blended learning course design - combining, where appropriate, intensive blocks of face-to-face collaborative learning on campus and weeks of 'anytime-anywhere' learning online.
- > In year four of MA and PGDE Primary full-time, extended school placements support experiential learning.
- > Learning in Context (LinC) Tutors in Primary programmes will provide advice and support both on campus and during school experience on Placement+ Days (non-class contact days during placement when students meet with their tutor and peers via online collaborative sessions, creating time to discuss, reflect and make connections between theory and practice).

> Engaging with pedagogy and curricular studies through creative inter-disciplinary contexts and methodologies.

> Problem-based learning, explored through key questions, critical incidents and school-based scenarios.

> Personalised practitioner enquiry, establishing an understanding of the professional power of ongoing critical reflection.



ITE students will engage with a learning continuum to develop an understanding of the socio-cultural context; themselves as a lifelong learner; the origins, purpose and nature of education; the historical and political context of Scottish Education, current issues, policy drivers and practices; children and young people and the communities in which they live and the school as part of that community; research informed approaches to teaching and learning; towards becoming a **critically, reflective, responsive practitioner** as they enter the profession.

ASIST - Aberdeenshire Student Incentive Scheme for Teaching

This year, we were delighted to offer students an opportunity to enhance their PGDE Secondary through the Aberdeenshire Student Incentive Scheme for Teaching (ASIST). Working with Aberdeenshire Council, this scheme was designed to meet the critical shortage of teachers in NE Scotland.

Successful applicants to the ASIST Scheme benefit from a further two years of employment in Aberdeenshire following their probationary year and £5000 of financial support, as well as a Local Authority mentorship for the duration of their PGDE and following years of employment.

School Experience placements are guaranteed within Aberdeenshire, allowing our students to build up important professional networks and friendships before beginning their careers.

For more information on the ASIST scheme visit www.abdn.ac.uk/pgt/asist



UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN AND NORTHERN ALLIANCE LEARNING HUB

MacRobert Building, University of Aberdeen



In partnership with the School of Education, the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative (www.northernalliance.scot) is launching a Northern Alliance Learning Hub in the School of Education's MacRobert Building. After months of work on the physical space: refurbishment of rooms; installation of IT; and procurement of furniture; the Hub is nearly complete.

Discussion with Northern Alliance local authority partners is taking place as we explore ways in which the space can best serve the needs of our learning communities. A working group has been created, which includes classroom practitioners from each of the eight Local Authorities, to explore and promote the exciting possibilities for collaborative professional learning communities' use of the facility as a hub point.

A first activity in the new University of Aberdeen and Northern Alliance Learning Hub will be a collaborative gathering with short presentations and discussions, with a virtual link-up to the Scottish Learning Festival. A subsequent formal launch is being planned which will mark the start of this initiative. Look out for information on the school's website and on social media for details of the launch event.

SHAOFANG LIN A New Route into Teaching

For Chinese student Shaofang Lin, discovering the Post-Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies not only allowed her to return to the job she loved - it saved her working a gruelling 70 hour week to save for a full-time PGDE.

Shaofang, who completed a teaching qualification in her home country before following her husband to Scotland and settling down in Banffshire, has a passion for learning and always intended to return to the classroom.

But with a three-year-old daughter to care for and a qualification that does not match the requirement for full registration as a teacher in Scotland, she thought her only option would be to save to take a year off to study for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) - the route most commonly taken by those who have already completed a subject-specific degree and want to become a teacher.

"Although I have a few years teaching experience in China working with pupils equivalent to P1 to P6, I knew I would need some help to get up to speed with the Scottish curriculum and educational policies," she said.

"I thought the only way to do this was through a PGDE, although it would have meant repeating some of the practical side of teaching I had already covered. It is something I was prepared to do but practically, it meant that I needed to take on two jobs, mostly in the evenings and at weekends, and work up to 70 hours a week to try and save enough to cover being a full-time student for a year.

"It was not very conducive to family life but I want to teach and it seemed the only way." Then Shaofang heard about the University's unique Post-Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies and said it was like a 'lifeline'.

It meant she could take on a full-time teaching role at Macduff Primary School while receiving additional support and training. "The course is an ideal fit for me," Shaofang added. "My days are long and I often need to study in the evening but I am used to hard work and this is not a problem.

"The course has been wonderful to ease the transition into a Scottish school. It's allowed me to get back into the classroom before I lose touch with my practical skills



while gaining the important extra knowledge I need to ensure I am meeting all the requirements of the curriculum.

"My school and the University have been incredibly supportive. My head teacher has been wonderful and has been there to give me a lot of help and support. Also, I cannot thank Mrs Mulligan enough for all her support during the online sessions, emails and feedback."

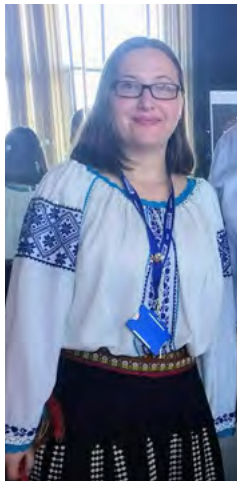
"I'm grateful that this alternative route exists. I have a real passion for learning and hope I can pass that on to the children I teach."

Events

We've celebrated a range of different events this year, from Chinese New Year to the Great Aberdeen Run; and we never miss an opportunity to bake for a good cause!



Staff attended Chinese New Year Celebrations on 5 February



Our PhD students and staff brought along a wide variety of food to the International Celebration Lunch



We had a great time walking in the parade for Grampian Pride



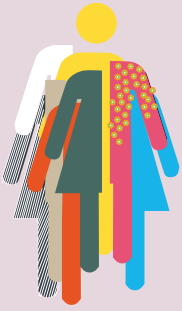
The support team were all winners at the Great Aberdeen Run



The school got festive to support Save the Children's Christmas Jumper Day

Our staff are always willing to eat cake for a good cause, baking efforts for the Macmillan coffee morning and Red Nose Day are going to be hard to beat next year!





Athena Swan

Recognising commitment to the advancement of gender equality in academia.

The Equality and Diversity team has been working to ensure the actions identified as part of our Athena SWAN bronze award are actioned and implemented. To date, we have been met our KPI targets for each quarter.

The Equality and Diversity team comprises 19 members drawn from academic and administrative staff, as well as PhD students. The team is currently seeking to two undergraduate students to join the team, to ensure that equality, inclusion and diversity is embedded throughout the whole School community.

Highlighting HR Policies

We are making a conscious effort to ensure HR policies are routinely highlighted on the plasma screens located in the School. All the HR policies can be found on the University website under “Working Here”, and can be directly accessed by visiting: www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/policies-guidance-3691.php

Unconscious Bias Training Events

29 October and 7 November 2018

Peter Sharp delivered two unconscious bias training sessions for academic staff in the autumn. These sessions were well attended and we would look to host more training sessions in 2019/20. The School has an action within its Athena SWAN action plan to ensure the majority of academic staff complete unconscious bias training, particularly as staff members are involved staff and student recruitment processes.

Chinese New Year Event

5 November 2018

Members of the Equality and Diversity committee, together with the School's Communications group hosted the Chinese New Year event on 5 November. The event was well attended by staff and PhD students, who enjoyed sampling traditional Chinese snacks, participated in the Chinese New Year quiz and heard the delightful music provided by Wenqiu Chen, an Elphinstone Institute student. We are grateful to the Confucius Institute for their input and it was nice to see staff from the Institute attend the event. The Confucius Institute promotes knowledge exchange between China and the North East Scotland, and provides a linguistic and cultural bridge. Images from this event can be seen on the opposite page.

University of Aberdeen Inclusion Week

4 - 8 March 2019

Several members of the Equality and Diversity team attended a number of events at the University's first inclusion week event. Two events, which were very well attended, were available as live stream, and the links to these presentations is provided here for anyone who missed these events. Charlie Martin was the keynote speaker for the Inclusion Week. Charlie is a motorsport professional who champions transgender rights following her own transition experiences. Charlie's keynote can be viewed here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=2gcah1MSqRY&feature=youtu.be

Professor Alison Murray and Dr Chris McNeil, delivered personal accounts of achieving career success while overcoming disability and managing other commitments. Their talks can be viewed here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=oiB2unPmflA&feature=youtu.be

International Celebration Event

18 June 2019

An International celebration lunch event was held on 18 June 2019. Staff and PhD students provided a range of delightful international food to celebrate the diversity of the School. All Education staff and PhD students were invited to bring along a pot/tray of cooked food or finger food, a type of salad or a cake/cookies from their home country or region. Contributors also provided a brief, detailing a couple of facts about their country/region. Images from this event can be seen on the opposite page. The Equality and Diversity team would like to express their thanks to Livia-Ina Tanasie, Maryam Alnoaimi, Mairsara Mairsara and Seham El Sati for their work in planning this event.

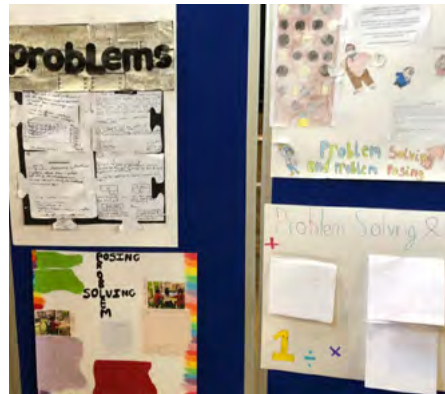
Menopause Network

The School of Education has established a Menopause Network group, which links with the University Menopause Network group. The aim of the network group is to provide support to staff and provide informative sessions, which provide advice on managing/coping with this phase in a woman's life. The symptoms of menopause and perimenopause experienced can be quite variable, and can have a significant impact on daily life. We are the only School, which is actively offering this support to our female staff.

Dr Kirsty Kiezebrink, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition, presented the School's first network session in December 2018 by hosting a session on nutrition in the menopause. This was followed by an excellent Cognitive Behaviour Therapy session run by Anne Smith in March 2019, which was very well attended by members from both the School of Education and the University network groups. The sessions for this academic year were rounded off by a Mindfulness session held in June 2019, led by Colette Savage from the School of Education.

Enterprising Maths Challenge

The School of Education has hosted the Enterprising Mathematical Challenge (EMC) Primary Day since 2003. This year, 28 teams representing 23 schools across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire took part in the challenge; putting both their team-work and problem solving skills to the test!



“My personal favourite part about the day was the head- to- head game because it was really fun going against other schools and looking for more strategies to win. By the end of the day, I was so tired from all the brain work.”

Grace, Hillside School

Organised by Dr Helen Martin in the historic Elphinstone Hall on King's College, the day itself is split into five parts, with the event kick-starting with the Poster Challenge.

This year's theme was 'Problem Solving and Problem Posing.' Teams were required to research and prepare their posters by selecting and illustrating their 3 favourite problems from the 2014-2018 Scottish Mathematical Challenge primary question archive. Alongside this, they were asked to create a problem of their own.

This was followed by the 'Round Table Challenge,' where teams were required to work collaboratively to solve a series of puzzles, each within a 4-minute time limit. This round certainly caused a buzz around Elphinstone Hall!

Up next was the 'Team Challenge,' where teams raced against the clock to answer as many mathematical problems as possible.

The penultimate round, the 'Head-to-Head,' saw individual students battle it out against opponents from another school, in a game focused on developing both tactical and strategic skills.

The final challenge of the day, the 'Relay Challenge,' brought teams back together to cooperatively crack a series of advanced problem solving questions. Once the children had an answer, they had to run to their allocated marker to get it checked before receiving the next question which was a really fun, fast-paced activity to end the day.

Raising attainment in Numeracy has been recognised as a key priority by the Scottish Government within the National Improvement Framework. Although the EMC is primarily aimed at providing children from across the region with an opportunity to participate in exploration of a wide range of mathematical skills, there is an additional competitive element to the day.

The overall winners of the event were Albyn School and Sunnybank School won the poster competition, judged by Brenda Harden, Secretary of Scottish Maths Challenge Committee and Sheila Nutkins, MA (Primary Education).

Selecting the winners was difficult and Brenda commented "All posters were of an extremely high standard and showcased many of the problems and offered descriptive solutions. The teams had obviously brainstormed when creating their own challenge question. There were many excellent ideas from the children that I can pass in to the committee".

A special thank-you to all the pupils who took part on the day and to the adults for scoring and encouraging all the teams to participate wholeheartedly in each of the challenges. The children were exceptional representatives of their schools and most importantly had fun with Maths, we look forward to next year!

Programme Focus

Our Counselling Programme

Anne Smith

I have been tutoring on the counselling programme in the School of Education, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, for over ten years. In addition to this work at university, I am an accredited counsellor working each week with clients. Being in practice is actually a requirement for the counselling tutors, insisted on by our professional bodies, so that we can connect fully with the skills/work we expect our students to be doing.

I became the Programme Director for the Undergraduate Counselling in July 2018 and I am working towards achieving my aim of the solid base for the counselling skills courses, by widening opportunity for students to improve their skills and knowledge in relation to counselling. We continue to attract a significant number of applicants across the programme and at all levels. The UG Counselling Skills courses continue to attract students from a wide range of backgrounds, but we are seeing a considerable growth

in numbers coming in from the School of Psychology, resulting in my building a strong working relationship between the two schools this academic year. We continue to have large numbers applying for the Person-Centred Diploma and now are seeing an increase in numbers of students looking to complete the full Masters degree.

At the heart of the counselling programme is a strong belief in human potential. The foundation of Person-Centred Therapy is the work of Carl Rogers, which focuses on creating the facilitative relationship that deeply values the other's experience.

I was recently asked to present at a BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) Conference on Trauma, in Glasgow, from my Person-Centred perspective. My presentation focused on how we, the PC practitioner, works with the traumatised client and how we supervise the student learning how to handle this challenging kind of work.



The presentation was well received and I also 'sat on the panel' for the question and answer session at the end of the day. Even with such a serious topic, there were a few laughs that day and a very supportive warmth in the room.

I have reflected on the challenges for staff of working with the student population which seems to have growing mental health issues. My notion is to make more use of our expertise in creating supportive relationships, with possibly a Wellbeing Support Group, meeting say once a month at the end of the day.

Discovering Mindfulness

Ever wanted to have simple effective tools to enable you to manage your emotions, stay focused and have more clarity on your decisions? Discovering Mindfulness a new online course within the University's OnDemand offering was created for those with an interest in learning about the science and wisdom behind this popular discipline. Designed to ensure a blend of knowledge and experiential learning, students engage with a wide range of mindfulness practises such as the breath, emotional surfing and body awareness and learn about the burgeoning research underpinning the expansion of mindfulness in our everyday lives.

Now prolific in business, healthcare, and spreading to many other areas of life, Discovering Mindfulness is giving students of all kinds the opportunity to get back in the driving seat of their own minds.

I am really thrilled to be a student again with the opportunity to not only study long distance whilst still working but also to study in an area which I feel will enhance my life, both personally and professionally. I have really enjoyed learning about the background to Mindfulness and the Mindful Brain and feel this grounding of practice in theory gives a richer appreciation and understanding of the practice itself. I have found the guided mindfulness exercises really valuable and have started journaling alongside my practice. I think this has enhanced my practice as I am able to identify and reflect on patterns of thought. Looking back over my journal, I see my thoughts have gained clarity in relation to certain issues that I have never consciously thought about before. From this space that I have given myself has come feelings of healing and transformation and ultimately gratitude. Although early days I do feel a sense of inner growth which is leading to a feeling of cleanliness (maybe not the right word) in the areas of my life...mind, body, work, relationships etc. and ultimately to an increased sense of well-being!

Shonaid Macdonald,
Discovering Mindfulness Student

Staff & Student Spotlight

PROFESSOR YVONNE BAIN

I have worked in the School of Education for over twenty years (although not continuously), becoming a Teacher Educator from a previous career as a Secondary Teacher of Physics and Computing. I am very proud to be working with fabulous colleagues in ground-breaking initiatives such as creating the first part-time distance learning PGDE back in 2005.

Currently, I'm working with great teams of colleagues such as the International PGDE (iPGDE) team who bring a wealth of experiences from across a range of settings. We aim to launch the iPGDE, a Masters level in-service professional learning programme for teachers in Qatar International Schools, as part of our Qatar campus provision. Eventually we plan to expand this more widely in other international settings.

I also work alongside Professor Donald Gray as part of the International Forum for Teacher Educators' Development (InFoTEd), a European-wide group of academics who actively undertake research around the professional learning of teacher educators' development, and use the research to inform and shape professional learning experiences explicitly for Teacher Educators.

Other parts of my professional life involve supervising PhD students and teaching on other programmes. I look forward to returning to teach on the PGDE (Secondary) and the Teaching Qualification for Further Education (TQFE) in the next academic year. I am also working in partnership with colleagues in the Northern Alliance to launch the Northern Alliance Learning Hub for educators across the Northern Alliance partnership.

Outwith work, I have a busy family life with my husband and our adult "children" who have come back home to live, one of whom has brought his Jack Russell dog with him, which is very loveable.

I am thrilled to have recently gained promotion to Professor: that is quite an honour! I owe an immense gratitude to many colleagues past and present, here and elsewhere, whom have been an instrumental part of my professional journey and development as an academic member of staff.



RACHEL WOLFORD PGCert Into Headship, Graduated 2017

My journey to becoming a Teacher was not straight-forward. It took several years, some very random jobs and having a family before I took the plunge and completed my PGDE in Primary Education. I loved working with the children which was inspiring, rewarding and provided what I needed - a challenge. As a Class Teacher I started developing my knowledge of science and STEM, leading different initiatives in school and supporting teachers in Moray to develop their science skills. In 2017, I was named STEM teacher of the year and became a Primary Science Teaching Trust Fellow.

I had just become a Depute Head Teacher, so I looked to the SCEL Into Headship course. I thought it would give me a solid foundation to build upon if, and when, I wanted to become a Head Teacher. An additional bonus was that I would be back at University of Aberdeen and knew I would be very well supported throughout - which I was.

Into Headship was at times difficult and all encompassing - but the rewards were worth it. I grew and developed, learning my own strengths and weaknesses through analysing my emotional intelligence, educational policies, strategic overview and most importantly - how to lead. I was very proud when I successfully completed the course and received my SCEL certificate - not knowing that I would be putting my studies into practice very soon! All the different elements of the Into Headship course came into play when I was Inspected as a Head Teacher in October 2018. Certain parts of the course that I had wondered "why am I doing this?" suddenly became incredibly important. Building my staff team, ensuring that I was accessible and able to motivate was incredibly important as was developing my own resilience to cope with the challenges of an inspection.

I am incredibly proud of my journey so far, it hasn't always been plain sailing, but I have grown so much and now I ensure that all my staff have opportunities to develop and learn. I am a mentor for an Into Headship candidate and I will start In Headship in August 2019, and I am very excited to be back at Aberdeen as a student again.



Research Update

SGSSS Internship Success for Laura

Laura Puhalak, a second year PhD student in the School, has secured a prestigious internship as part of a scheme led by the Scottish Graduate School of Social Sciences working in partnership with private and public sector organisations.

This three month full-time internship, led by the Strategic Analysis Team at the Scottish Government, has the title “Culture Childhood SHS [Scottish Household Survey] longitudinal analysis”. The purpose of this internship will be to report on an analysis of elements of the SHS dataset.

In particular, the report will explore any links between exposure to cultural activities during childhood, and later well-being.

Laura’s doctoral studies, under the supervision of Dr Dean Robson and Dr Peter Mtika, are focussed on a mixed methods exploration of student teachers’ well-being and first-year University experiences. It is envisaged that the internship may bring a different perspective on these issues, thereby potentially enhancing Laura’s PhD-related work.

In addition, Laura hopes that the internship may clarify career directions and enhance future opportunities.

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The Scottish Graduate School of Social Sciences offers a variety of excellent opportunities for postgraduate students at Scottish universities. These opportunities include training events, hubs, festivals and internships. These internships, announced twice every year, are organised in collaboration with organisations within both private and public sectors, visit www.sgsss.ac.uk
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Verbatim Performance Research Project

Dr William Barlow is working with colleagues at New York University and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland on using verbatim performance as a research technique to contribute to our understanding of potential internal or overt bias in relation to perceived gender, ethnicity and accent.

Verbatim performance is a genre of theatre which centres on interviews with people that form the basis of a representation (Paget, 2009). The stimuli of a verbatim performance originate from a variety of sources including government statements, well-known personalities and politicians, documentary films and contemporary documents to name but a few (Weiss, 1971).

All source materials are freely available and in the public domain. Therefore, verbatim performance is not created by a playwright or a devising process (Gibson, 2011). Instead, it centres on real people, in a specific place and time, using their words gestures/ physical characteristics.

The Verbatim Performance Lab (VPL) then creates a flipped version of the original source by swapping genders, ethnicity and accent while retaining original source words, gestures and physical characteristics. The difference is that this time the words might be spoken by an actor of a different colour/race/gender and accent.

You are invited to view the sources undertaken thus far via the VPL website by visiting: <https://sites.google.com/nyu.edu/verbatim-performance-lab/home>

This project recently obtained ethical approval and we would ask that you kindly return to complete an online questionnaire outlining your responses to recordings.

For more information on this project email: william.barlow@abdn.ac.uk

SERA Workshop

Representatives from the SERA Research Students Group organised an event at the School of Education targeting PhD students and early career researchers from across Scottish universities with the aim of enhancing the research skills and knowledge of the participants.

The one-day event was arranged into two workshops, the first of which focused on analysing qualitative data, presented by Dr Rachel Shanks, Senior Lecturer at the School of Education. The second workshop concentrated on how to conduct interviews, focus groups and observations, presented by Dr Angela Jaap, Lecturer in Professional Development, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

The participants explored how to collect qualitative data, and practical sessions in coding qualitative data manually and using NVivo software.

In addition, the workshops provided participants with the opportunity to engage in discussions as a way to improve their skills and knowledge in data collection and analysis.

Conference Digest

Below is a section of some of the conferences attended this year by academics from the School of Education.

PROFESSOR PAMELA ABBOT

30 May 2019 'Empowering women and girls on the educational path', ESTONIA (*hosting NGO Mondo Workshop*)

PROFESSOR YVONNE BAIN

2 - 6 July 2018 International Forum for Teacher Education Development (InfoTED), Trondheim NORWAY

DR WILL BARLOW

11 - 14 April 2019 NYU Steinhardt Forum 2019: 'Theatre and Health', New York USA (*Presenting 'Inclusive communities - an intergenerational drama project'*)

15 - 19 April 2019 NYU Educational Theatre, New York USA (*undergraduate and postgraduate teaching*)

DR LIZ CURTIS

2 - 6 July 2018 International Forum for Teacher Education Development (InfoTED), Trondheim NORWAY

4 - 7 April 2019 European Association of Teachers of History, 26th EUROCLIO Annual Conference 'Bringing History to Life', Gdansk POLAND (*Workshop 'Enacting the Past: Brining the history of Aberdeen to life with student teachers'*)

KATRINA FOY

28 - 31 August 2018 European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) Annual Conference, Budapest HUNGARY (*Presenting KINDINMI Symposium*)

6 - 7 September 2018 Contemporary Childhood Conference: Children in Space, Place and Time. University of Strathclyde

DR ARCHIE GRAHAM

21 - 23 November 2018 Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) Annual Conference, Glasgow UK (*Presenting work on TPRG*)

2 - 6 July 2018 International Forum for Teacher Education Development (InfoTED), Trondheim NORWAY

PROFESSOR DONALD GRAY

6 - 9 July 2019 'Philosophy of Education as Lived Experience: navigating through dichotomies of thought and action', Tilos GREECE

LINDSAY MACDOUGALL

21 - 23 November 2018 Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) Annual Conference, Glasgow UK (*Presenting work on TPRG*)

NEIL MCLENNAN

13 September 2018 British Educational Research Association (BERA) Annual Conference, Newcastle UK (*Presenting 'The impact policy on leadership practice: growing a leadership agenda'*)

11 July 2019 'Creating a New Leadership Paradigm' Scottish Future's Forum (Scottish Parliament Think Tank), Edinburgh UK

DR PETER MTIKA

21 - 23 November 2018 Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) Annual Conference, Glasgow UK (*Presenting work on TPRG*)

DR GRAEME NIXON

3 - 7 March 2019 European Academy of Religion, Bologna ITALY (*Presenting 'Demographic of Religious Education' with Dr David Smith and Dr Jo Pearce [UCL]*)

12 - 14 June 2019 'Liminal Spaces, Images and Texts Conference, Dublin IRELAND (*Presenting 'Mindfulness and Liminality'*)

SHEILA NUTKINS

28 - 31 August 2018 European Early Childhood Education Research Association (EECERA) Annual Conference, Budapest HUNGARY (*Presenting KINDINMI Symposium*)

DR DEAN ROBSON

21 - 23 November 2018 Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA) Annual Conference, Glasgow UK (*Presenting work on TPRG*)

DR RACHEL SHANKS

3 - 7 September 2018 European Conference on Educational Research: Inclusion and Exclusion, Resources for Educational Research? Bolzano ITALY (*Presenting 'How Career Phases, Professional Learning Communities and Experiences Afford and Constrain Participation in Different Ecosystems of teaching Learning' and 'Representation in the Balance: socio-cultural positioning rights discourse and forums of representation in Scottish secondary schools'*)

10 - 16 August 2019 European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) 'Thinking Tomorrow's Education: Learning from the past, in the present and for the future', Aachen GERMANY (*Presenting 'Comparative study of new pathways into teaching in Malta and Scotland'*)

ANNE SMITH

19 March 2019 British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) 'Working in supervision with the impact of trauma with in a healthcare setting', Glasgow UK (*Presenting 'Trauma from a person-centred perspective'*)

DR DAVID SMITH

5 March 2019 European Academy of Religion, Bologna ITALY (*Presenting 'Who is teaching RE in England and Scotland? An Empirical Study of English and Scottish Religious Education Teachers' with Dr Graeme Nixon and Dr Jo Pearce [UCL]*)

9 - 10 May 2019 Association of University Lecturers in Religion and Education (AULRE) Annual Conference 2019, Newman University, Birmingham, UK (*Presenting 'The Demographics of RE Teachers in England and Scotland in 2017: An Empirical Study' with Dr Graeme Nixon and Dr Jo Pearce [UCL]*)

LORNA STEWART

23 February 2019 British Educational Research Association (BERA) 'Re-imagining a curriculum for teacher knowledge', London UK

27 - 29 May 2019 Teaching Training Institutions Initiative eTwinning TTI Workshop, Brussels BELGIUM



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